



Annual Report 2008-2009

Care Leavers of Australia Network
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Care Leavers Australia Network (CLAN) is an incorporated, non-profit organisation that has recently attained State and Federal government funding. Before the grants, CLAN was funded entirely by membership fees, small grants and donations.

OUR VISION

CLAN is an independent national support and advocacy network for all Australians that grew up in children's Homes and orphanages or were fostered as children. Our members include people raised in every state of Australia and in overseas orphanages child migrants the stolen generation and foster children.

OUR PURPOSE

CLAN's objective is to raise community awareness of care leaver issues, and to campaign and lobby for government assistance to redress them. Being raised without a family has lifelong implications that require lifelong support services. CLAN can provide information, understanding and emotional support.

OUR MISSION AND VALUES

- To listen, hear and believe
- To advocate on every level for justice, peace and heal for care survivors
- To identify specific and individual strategies which will deliver positive life-changing outcomes to heal the past and give care leavers a chance of happiness and closure
- To document Care Leavers history their personal stories though a National Orphanage Museum

WHAT CAN CLAN DO TO ACHIEVE THEIR GOALS?

CLAN aims to provide a network where care leavers throughout Australia can communicate with each other and share their experiences. From our work, we know that many people who grew up in 'care' feel isolated and alone, believing the traumas of their childhood years were somehow their fault.

CLAN aspires to raise public consciousness of care leaver's past situation and its effects. This is so society can acknowledge the abuse and trauma of state wards and Home children, and that it becomes as well known as the experiences of the stolen generation, child migrants and adoptees.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Leonie Sheedy

What an amazing year 2009 has been so far!. We have achieved the almost impossible; the Prime Minister of all Australians, Kevin Rudd will issue an apology on behalf of the Nation and the Federal Government.

The Apology is to be done by the end of November 2009. Many CLAN members have mixed feelings regarding the Prime Minister of Australia apologising. Some feel it's too little too late. However, overwhelmingly most of our members are very happy and supportive of the apology. They cannot wait for the day to occur and be in Canberra to hear the words from our Prime Minister.

We hope that the date is announced soon and that the apology is the first step in the healing process. However there is much more to be done for Australian Care Leavers and their families.

At least though with the apology, it will bring acknowledgement of what we endured as little children in the 500 plus orphanages, children's Homes and foster care. The community and our families will hopefully have a better understanding of us. We will no longer be the hidden and forgotten Australians and we will become Remembered Australians.

The other event that occurred this year was our co founder of CLAN Dr Joanna Penglase retired in June after helping to establish CLAN 9 years ago. We wish Joanna our very best wishes in her new adventures in life and our door at CLAN is always open to her at anytime and we hope she will visit often.

We would not be getting our apology if it wasn't for Joanna's ground breaking work and her thesis "Orphans of the Living". Joanna, you have

taught me many things and I sincerely thank you. I hope there are not too many commas and grammar mistakes in this report.

CLAN has continued to support care leavers in all states.

In Western Australia, we assisted many people with their applications to WA redress. Lindal Sambrook was employed by CLAN to support I WA. Care Leavers who didn't live in WA.

Lindal assisted people in each state of Australia, as well Scotland, USA and N.Z. We thank Lindal for her caring and empathic work and commitment to our issues.

When CLAN was notified about the cutting of the Redress payments from \$80,000 to \$45,000, The CLAN committee supported the call for a protest in Perth.

Along with other groups in WA, we held the first protest outside the WA Parliament House on 11th August. There were over 200 people who attended. It was the first time that the three groups, Stolen Generation, Child Migrants and Care Leavers were united together. It was an amazing day to witness.

We have since held two other protests in Perth and will continue to lobby the WA. Government regarding this unfair and mean spirited decision. We wish to extend our thanks to all of those who have supported the protests. A special mention goes to one of our Victorian members Vlad who held the fort when I couldn't attend the second protest in September. Vlad paid his own way to Perth and back.

In Victoria our members continue to hold silent protests. For the last 12 months we have been going to the Minister's electoral offices, this was a good way to get the message out to the suburban and country areas such as Bendigo and Geelong.

Our Victorian members requested that the protests be returned to Melbourne at Parliament House. Therefore, the next protest will be held on 6th November. Usually we meet for a bite to eat after the protest and it's a great time to catch up. We have also run successful workshops on writing your story and had a guest speaker on our legal rights which had over 30 people attend. Thank you to Phyllis for organising the rooms at Ross House. We have also held a get together early this year at the site of the Victorian Memorial site. We will continue to lobby for justice and redress in this state.

We have also held a number of regional get togethers in Geelong and these were quite well attended by our members. Some even drove from Melbourne to attend.

South Australia. Priscilla in Adelaide has kindly held some socials for S.A. members at her home and they in the main have been well attended. There were socials held in May 2008 at Central Markets, in November 2008 there was a Melbourne cup Lunch at Priscilla's home and a CLAN get together.

However the last social was cancelled due to lack of response. Priscilla is going to organise another social event in the New Year. We will continue to encourage our SA members to hold socials in other areas other than Adelaide. Many thanks Priscilla for organising the socials. And also Marian who also opened her home and shared it with the CLAN members. Thank you both.

In Qld we have many successfully get together, our thanks goes to Jim Luthy who is the Qld Social organiser. Jim varies the socials by location, one in Ipswich, Redcliffe, another on the Sunshine Coast and in central Brisbane. Just recently there was a social held on the Gold Coast. Many people attended and had an enjoyable time. Sadly, Jim's health declined during the year and he had to resign from the CLAN committee. We hope it won't be too long before he is able to be a part of the CLAN committee again. Thank you to all the Qld members for their assistance with the socials and for making them a huge success.

Due to receiving federal funding we were able to introduce the 1800 number for Queenslanders in October to ring CLAN. This has been very well received and many of our Qld members are making good use of the number.

In Tasmania last November I attended the opening of the first state to launch the F.A. Memorial. The ceremony was held on 26th November in the botanical gardens in Hobart. I met the Launceston members and Harry another member drove to Hobart for the day. There were about 50 people in attendance and it was a beautiful sunny day and the roses that were planted looked so beautiful. It was decided to return for a follow up social on the first anniversary of the memorial.

Kris organised a social in Launceston last December. Kris reported in the follow up newsletter, "the weather was horrendous that words couldn't convey just how awful it was." However, 2 people braved the elements and came along and luckily Warren had a key to a shelter and they enjoyed hot drinks and a chat for some hours.

Sadly Kris our Tassie social organiser has been unwell. The social has been postponed till next February.

Many thanks to Kris, Harry and all the Tassie members for supporting the socials.

Northern Territory

It has been some time since we held a social in the NT but I am informed that one is been organised by one of our members Heather for February next year. As we have three members and two of them Heather and John are good friends they are able to provide mutual support to each other. We will endeavour to promote CLAN in the next 12 months in the N.T. Some years

back we held a successful one at Fanny Bay and Heather and her daughters did a fabulous job cooking the BBQ and it was a very enjoyable evening..

NSW. Over the last 12 months we have held some morning teas that have been well attended. We have also had a lawyer come and speak to the members.

Maureen a CLAN member in Newcastle has been very good at organising social get togethers at Cardiff RSL and they get a regular group attending. Derek and Geoff from Wollongong are holding the first social in their local area. It's so good to see the men getting involved and organising this important first social in the Illawarra region.

We were kept very busy for the about 4 months on the working party with the NSW Healing ceremony which was held on 19th Sept. Joanna was a guest speaker and many other NSW Care leavers played an important part in the service. A special thanks go to CLAN member Steve Quinn who came to CLAN in January 2008 with the idea to get the churches and charities to join with the state government in a combined service. By most accounts it was a very successful event. Frank Golding the Vice President represented CLAN.

Thank you to the CLAN committee members and others.

I would like to acknowledge and thank people who have assisted CLAN over the last 12 months.

Joanna Penglase, co-founder of CLAN and editor of the *Clanicle*, retired after many years of service to CLAN and care leaver's issues. We sincerely thank Joanna for her amazing efforts in laying the foundations of CLAN..

We would also like to thank Dorothy Harrison our treasurer of a few years, who retired from the position. Thank you for your efforts in very challenging times for CLAN and its limited budget.

Also Lindal Sambrook, project manager for Redress WA and website coordinator welcomed her first child, Sebastian in June.

On behalf of CLAN, its members and supporters I would like to thank Joanna, Dorothy and Lindal for their contributions to the operation of CLAN and wish them all the best with their future ventures.

We would also to thank and farewell Jim Luthy who was recently taken ill and spent time in hospital but is still social secretary for Queensland.

On behalf of CLAN, I would also like to thank Victor Ishak for covering the role of treasurer till the AGM.

Also retiring from the CLAN committee is Vicki Geraghty, Vicki has been a sensible and sane supporter and she has been on the committee for 4 years. She did try to get some sort of systems in the office but to no avail. Vicki has

agreed we can send her an email and she is happy to assist us with any problems we encounter. We wish her all good wishes .

We would like to say a sincere thanks to Frank Golding our Vice President and who is also the new editor of the Clanicle. Thank you for your assistance and support you have given to the office staff while I was away on leave and for supporting me to with administration workload.

Thanks also to Phyllis Excel who had a major operation during the year and has been a wonderful support and contributor to the needs of care leavers. A special thank you to Phyllis and Frank for your efforts with the Wesley and Orana submission .CLAN had joined in partnership with both groups for the Victorian submission for the new Care Leavers service. It was a pleasure to work together as a team on that project.

Pat Griffiths, who came to CLAN as a student from Macquarie University about 5 years ago and has stayed and supported CLAN, she has taken the minutes of our meetings for at least 3 years. Pat we appreciate your efforts and support.

Finally there are few other people who are deserving of a mention , Pat James for her generous commitment and also for printing of our compliments slips and donations to CLAN.

Gay Brown is a worthwhile candidate for Volunteer of the Year. Gay has covered every single library CLAN has and that's over 600 books. She came into the office twice week while I was on leave to support the office staff. A huge thanks to you for all that you give us. Gay we do appreciate your commitment to CLAN.

Anthony Sheedy for your help with the newsletters and the envelopes, stamps and labels. This is a great help to us in the office.

Finally Terry and Gwen who have donated the mirror in our office and the photo work on our front office windows. They are also generously donating our business cards made into magnets for our members.

Thank you to our Patrons and supporters

We are lucky to have two Patrons Richard Marles MP for Corio in Geelong and Jason Clare MP for Blaxland in the heart of Bankstown. We thank you so much for your efforts behind the scenes to get our apology. We sincerely say thank you and we appreciate what you have done for all care leavers.

Sincere thanks to also former Senator Andrew Murray, Steve Irons MP for Swan in WA. Not to forget Senators Claire Moore, Gary Humphries Rachel Siewert. Mitch Fifield.

It's wonderful to have bi partisan support for care leavers issues and CLAN.

We would also like to thank the past providers who have supported us with donations through the last year.

Steve Walkaden of UPA for the \$5,500 donation. Steve has been with us since 2000.

Paul Linosser of Mackillop Family Services for \$1000 to get a MYOB. Paul has since retired and we wish him all the best and sincere thanks for his wonderful support over the years.

\$3000 donation from Anglicare NSW???

\$500 donation from St Luke's in Bendigo, we joined them up as members.

Barnardos for their \$5000 donation, they also have been with us since 2000 and so we say thank you Louise Voight for your support of CLAN.

Mike a Queensland member who donated \$500 from his Qld Redress settlement. Thank you Mike for generous donation.

Thank you to each and every member who has given a donation and stamps, we do appreciate it no matter the amount.

Thanks to Rev Bill Crews for all his support over the years, our first meeting was at Ashfield. Bill has always found a spot on his radio show for CLAN.

Thanks Bill.

Staff News.

CLAN employed Benita Rupan to take the place of Lindal as website coordinator. Benita works 5 days a week and is excellent at keeping the website up-to-date and scanning photos, writing reports and did a fabulous job calculating the apology survey results. She makes me look very professional.

Julie Evans is our office manager and she is a very capable manager and I would like to give a big thank you to, Julie for the smooth running of the CLAN office while I was on leave.

Julie and Benita ran the office during my absence of leave in September, which was a busy period with the many many calls, emails and visits from members during September when the NSW Healing Ceremony was on. We highly value their work and commitment to CLAN and we are very fortunate to have such fine staff members.

We will be employing another part time staff person to share some of the load when the apology is announced. We are planning for the increase in calls from people who have never known we are there for them.

Feedback from the announcement of the impending apology

Clearly the highlight of CLAN's year has been the announcement of the Federal Apology to all Australian care leavers

CLAN has been inundated with phone calls and emails congratulating, supporting and thanking CLAN and its members and supporters for raising awareness of care leaver concerns. We placed our member's comments up on the website, there are over 60 comments with good, bad and indifferent feelings expressed about the apology.

Media

CLAN received extensive media coverage for advocating care leaver issues and many care leavers organised their own media interviews. Thank you to all of our members who are too many to mention who have done media interviews CLAN sincerely thanks these members for bringing to light care leaver issues and sharing their painful memories with the public. It is not an easy task.

Women's Weekly will be featuring CLAN in their November edition. The National Orphanage Museum appeared on ABC collectors show in June.

Lobby for Justice and Redress for Care Leavers

CLAN has also made substantial progress in lobbying State and Federal Government for recognition and redress in all states. We will continue to advocate for justice and redress and services for all care leavers and their families to each and every level of state and federal government. We will not give up!

New Victorian Care Leaver service.

This year Victorian care leavers have a new support and counselling service with the closure of VANISH. Berry Street in partnership with Relationships Australia has been granted the tender to support Victorian care leavers. CLAN did apply for the tender but was unsuccessful. However, CLAN will remain an important element in the advisory board for this new service.

CLAN's annual report illustrates 3 graphs and 1 image. The first graph outlines the decrease of members re-joining for the 2008-9 period, the second graph demonstrates that the CLAN website has been steadily increasing its visits as evidence with highest website hits during the August-September period, possibly due to news of the Federal Apology. The final graph illustrates a significant increase of new visits, from people who are not frequent visitors of the CLAN website or members of CLAN. The last image shows the amount of members from each state of Australia, and overseas.

Although CLAN has seen a significant decrease in rejoined members for the 2007-8 period, The reasons for the decline in membership could be that the client received what they wanted from CLAN, they told their story, linked up with others and so perhaps no longer needs support and have moved onto other things in their life and have no wish to rejoin.

Many of our members are elderly and they forget to renew their memberships and some of our members have died. We send out two renewal notices one in June and another in the August newsletter. We are still receiving some renewal notices into October.

In the future with more staff and resources we will be able to follow up our lapsed members.

Financial Report.

There is a substantial growth in donations to CLAN, outlined further in the Treasurer's Report.

Moreover, as many of our members are aware, CLAN has received a \$300,000 grant to be spent over 2 years from the Federal Government and \$35,000 for the next 5 years from the NSW State Government.

Thank you to the Federal Government for this funding grant, also to the following states who provide funding to CLAN each year and they are NSW for \$35,000, Victoria \$15,000, Tasmania \$25,000, ACT \$3,000, South Australia \$15,000

With the additional funding from the NSW State, and Federal government; CLAN is happy to announce that care leavers in Queensland can now contact the national office on the toll free phone number.

As of yet, the CLAN committee has not decided on how the grant will be spent, and this is being put forward to the new committee. I am sure they will have many suggestions to benefit CLAN and its members and supporters.

As we are unaware if CLAN will receive recurrent funding, the funding is sure to be invested wisely.

Finally, I conclude this President's report by writing this is an exciting time in CLAN's development, we are moving into our 10th year since CLAN was established. We have a lot of work to do in the following year.. As well as a major celebration Who would have thought we'd last 10 years.

What an achievement!

I feel encouraged and enthusiastic for the year ahead. I hope you join with me on this journey ahead.

Best wishes and Hooroo,
Leonie Sheedy
President
CLAN.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The 2008-09 Accounts have been Audited and the Audit report received from Sergio Orlando Saavedra. The accounts for 2009-10 period are prepared on MYOB and the budget has been accepted by the Committee on the 8th October 2009 meeting.

Though the 2007-8 period had more members re-joining, CLAN had very little donations with only \$1,599.86 for the year. This is in comparison to the 2008-9 period wherein re-joining memberships were significantly lower than the previous year but vouched a \$15,860.80 in donations.

Income was predominantly from membership of \$12,000 with 745 members nationwide and overseas. Individual donations also played a significant role in the operation of CLAN with \$11,800 in individual donations this year.

Leading CLAN's major expenses have been salaries, wages rent and telephones utilising over 80% of operating costs.

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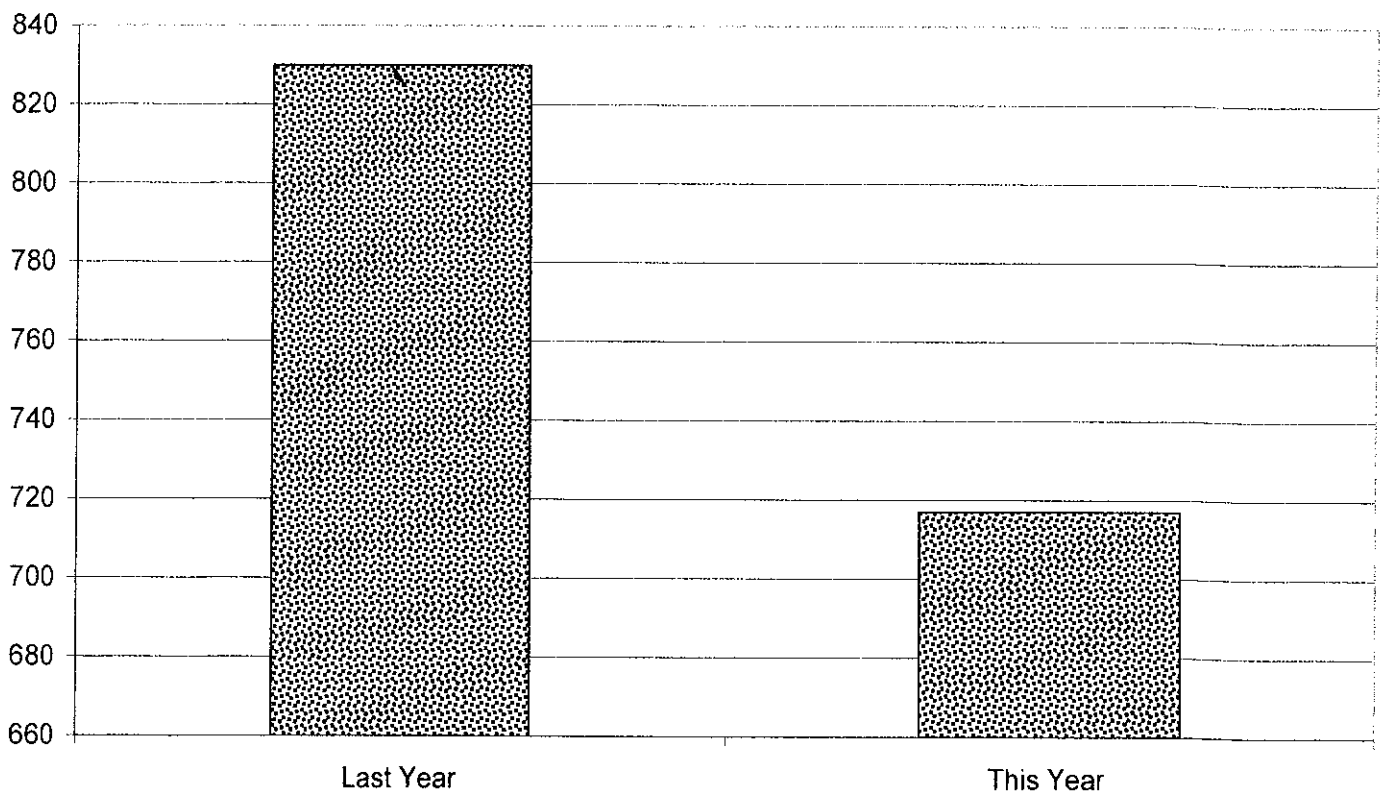
As stated in the President's message, the current CLAN committee has decided to use the grant to employ an additional part timer to be employed for the next 3 months to help with the additional anticipated workload associated with the Federal Government apology.

As of yet, the expenditure for the remainder of the grant is undecided and will be decided by the new committee members.

In conclusion, CLAN is very grateful for the State and Federal funding as it assures that CLAN is able to assist to its members and supporters for the next 2 years if no further funding is received. However, CLAN will continue to lobby all government bodies to ensure CLAN can keep supporting its members and supporters.

GRAPH 1:

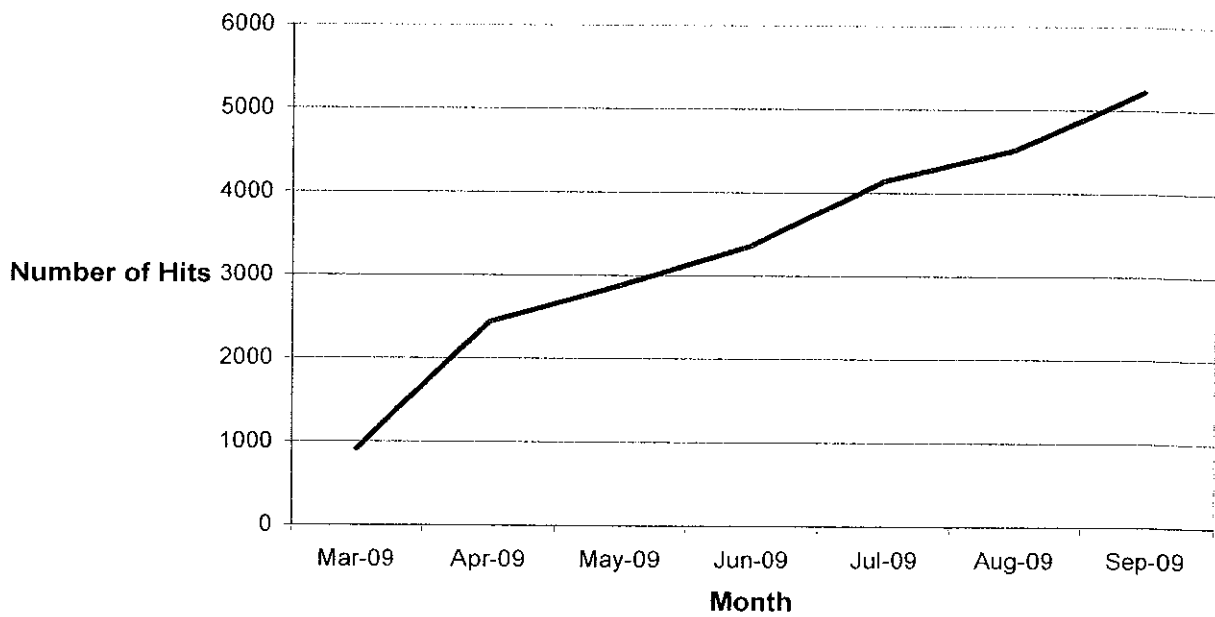
MEMBERS RE-JOINING CLAN



The graph above, illustrates a significant decrease in members rejoining for the 2008-9 period of a decrease of 113 members. However CLAN now has over a 100 new members.

GRAPH 2:

Website Hits



The second graph outlines that the CLAN website has been steadily increasing its visits as evidence with highest website hits during the August-September period, possibly due to news of the Federal Apology. The third graph illustrates a significant increase of new visits, from people who are not frequent visitors of the CLAN website or members of CLAN.

GRAPH 3:

New Visits vs. Returning Visits

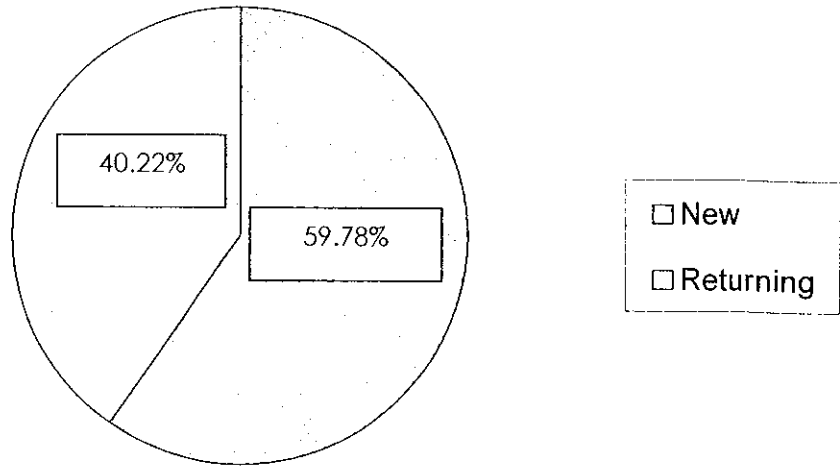
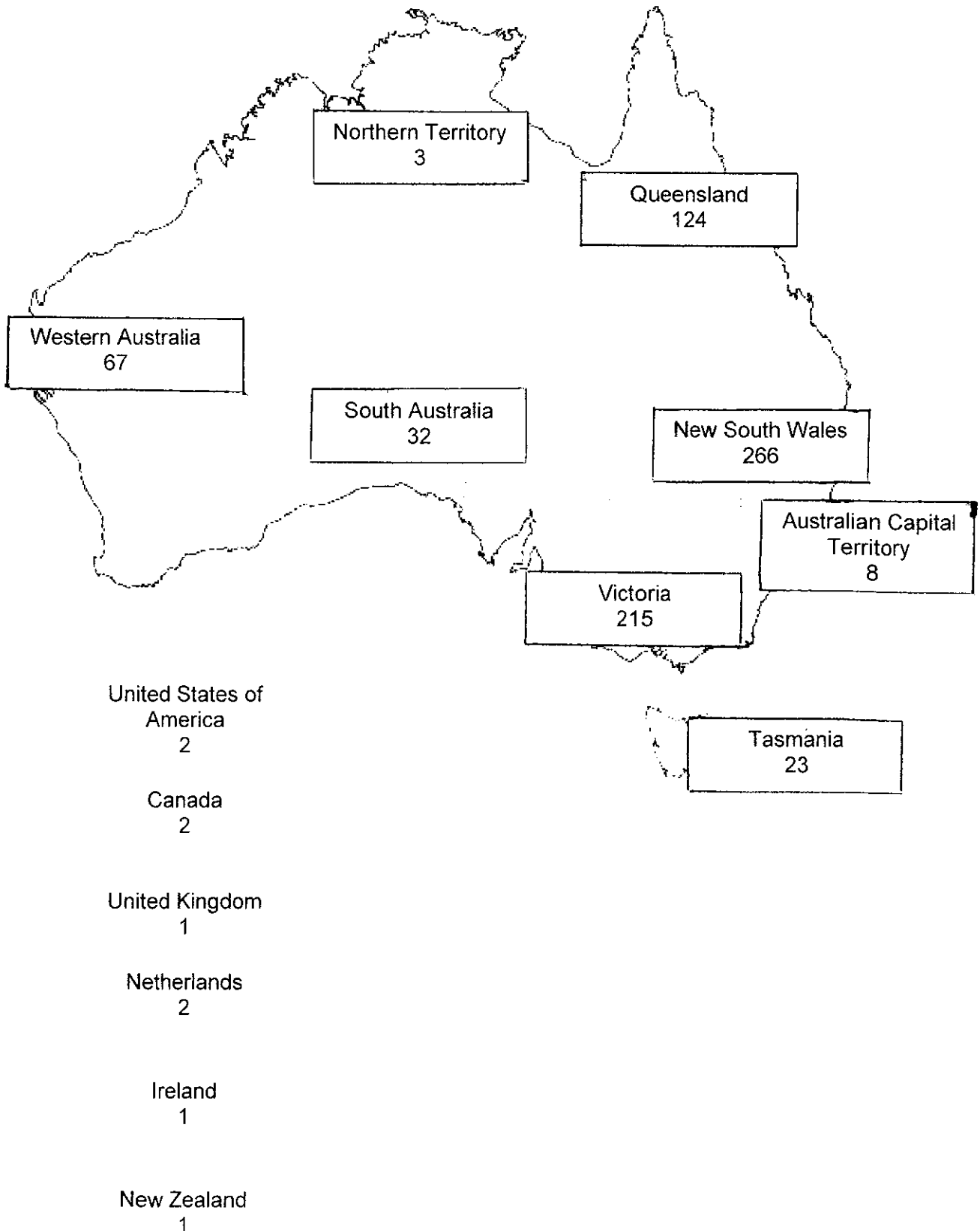


Image 1:

CLAN MEMBERS ACROSS AUSTRALIA AND OVERSEAS
A TOTAL OF 745 MEMBERS



ABOUT CLAN

CLAN is an independent national support and advocacy body for all Australians that grew up in children's Homes and orphanages or were fostered as children. Our members include people raised in every state of Australia and in overseas orphanages child migrants the stolen generation and foster children.

CLAN has a committee board made up of 7 individuals who are nominated and elected annually by members of CLAN.

| | |
|----------------|-----------------------------|
| Leonie Sheedy | (President) |
| Frank Golding | (Vice-President) |
| Pat Griffiths | (Secretary) |
| Victor Ishak | (Treasurer) |
| Phyllis Excel | (Ordinary Committee Member) |
| Vicki Geraghty | (Ordinary Committee Member) |
| Jim Luthy | (Ordinary Committee Member) |

Staff:

| | |
|--------------|------------------------|
| Julie Evans | (Office Manager) |
| Benita Rupan | (Website Co-ordinator) |

In CLAN's 9th year of operation, we have achieved:

- 3 full-time paid employees
- Our Senate Inquiry and its report, 'Forgotten Australians' (2004)
- The CLAN website, which we are developing as a database of information about all aspects of institutional care.
- Writing workshops to help people tell their story
- A bi-monthly newsletter
- Media coverage of Care Leaver issues through newspaper articles, radio programs and television programs like the ABC's 4Corners program in August 2003 – "*The Homies*" and ABC's *The Collectors* in June 2009.
- Publication in the press of Care Leavers' personal stories
- An ever-expanding library of printed and electronic resources
- Silent protests in Victoria and Western Australia
- A state apology from New South Wales and a Healing Ceremony
- Becoming a significant factor in prompting the Federal Apology to be made later this year.
- An increased awareness of Care Leaver issues - almost unreported when CLAN began.