



Initiatives of Change  
Australia

# newsbriefs

Building trust across the world's divides

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February 2021 NO. 309

## Now is the time.

As we get back on track after the COVID year, we are delighted to launch our new trustbuilding project, Our Uluru Response (OUR). This is a three-year project in which we will walk together with First Nations people to build an inclusive Australia that fully acknowledges the past, and looks to a fairer future of dignity and justice for all.

Please join us for the launch on 19 March! Click through to read more about OUR plans, and what the lofC community in Queensland is already doing. We'd love you to join us.

We also welcome our new Executive Officer, Margaret Hepworth, who joined us in January. Margaret is an award-winning peace educator who has worked extensively with schools and diverse communities.

With many new partners and participants coming on board, this issue of *NewsBriefs* includes a guide to what the lofC community holds in common around Australia and across the globe. You'll also see how Jim Beggs, former national president of the Waterside Workers Federation, applied these values and practices in his own life and career on the Melbourne waterfront.

*Newsbriefs* is the bi-monthly newsletter of Initiatives of Change in Australia—part of a worldwide movement of people of diverse cultures and backgrounds who share a vision for a just, peaceful and sustainable world.

## NEWS

### Trustbuilding Program: Our Uluru Response

Voice, Treaty and Truth: this is the call made by the Uluru Statement from the Heart. lofCA is responding with a new project for truth telling and truth hearing about our Indigenous history and current realities. The project works in partnership with First Nations leaders and advisors through education forums, workshops, and local initiatives.

[Lean more.](#)





## Visiting Cherbourg on a Trustbuilding Journey

Australians from different backgrounds visit an old Aboriginal settlement in Cherbourg, Queensland, on Wakka Wakka traditional lands. The day included a tour of Cherbourg's history museum, a BBQ lunch and a Yarning Circle led by First Nations Elder Uncle Eric Law. Read more and watch the videos [here](#).

## Peace Educator Takes the Helm at IofC Australia

Margaret Hepworth came on board as Executive Officer in January 2021. Margaret is a teacher, educator and long-term contributor to the work of IofC in Australia and India. In 2014, she founded the independent peace education initiative, The Gandhi Experiment, with a vision of world peace through education. Read about Margaret's work and achievements [here](#).



## Making Peace with the Earth: A social and spiritual ecologist speaks

Creators of Peace NSW hosted Dr Ben-Zion Weiss, social and spiritual ecologist, at a Zoom event on Saturday 6 February. He gave a clear account of how First Nations peoples have revered the Earth as our mother—and why making peace with the Earth means taking care of our First Nations relationships. Listen to his talk [here](#).

## PERSONAL STORIES



## Sprout Alumni: Anvita and Shannon

In 2019, Anvita Bisaria and Shannon Ormiston took part in the Sprout program, which supports participants to develop local projects for sustainability.

The experience propelled them into setting up Regenerative Roots, a community-based initiative to heal our separation from nature. Read their story [here](#).

## Personal story: Jim Beggs

Jim Beggs began work at the Melbourne docks in 1951, in a job often associated with radical politics and pilfering. He knew things needed to change—and he started with himself.

It was the start of a lifelong, nationwide story leading to far-reaching industrial reforms and Presidency of the Waterside Workers Federation. [Watch](#) the interview.

## RESOURCES



### lofC Values and Practices

lofC communities and programs are active in 60 countries around the world. lofC groups have worked for change, healing and transformation in communities torn by racism, conflict and industrial strife. Our work is different in different parts of the world, but lofC communities hold some values and practices in common.

Learn what they are [here](#).

## EVENTS

### Life Matters

**Friday 5 March - Monday 8 March 2021:** The first LM workshop for 2021 takes place at Armagh. This is a three-day residential workshop that gives participants the tools and drive to make positive change in their lives. For more details please see [here](#).

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### Creators of Peace Monthly Speaker Series

**Saturday 6 March 2021:** An afternoon in conversation with Tui Beggs on 'The Woman Behind the Man.' Time: 2 - 4 pm. For more details and to RSVP for the Zoom link please see [here](#).

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### International launch of a new conversation guide: 'Advocating for a New Story of our Shared Humanity'

**Sunday 14 March 2021:** Creators of Peace are launching a guide to conversation circles for trust and community building. These engage individuals and groups in exploring the impact of damaging narratives of human hierarchies and hurting histories. Time: 11am - 12.30pm GMT via Zoom. Note that the launch has been organized with partners in the UK and therefore the time will be late evening in Australia—10 pm in Melbourne and Sydney! For more details on the panel of speakers at the launch and to register please see [here](#).

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## Our Uluru Response

**Friday 19 March 2021:** 'Walking Together to support the Uluru Statement from the Heart' : A special forum with guest speaker Thomas Mayor. The evening will include a Smoking Ceremony, Welcome to Country by local Indigenous Elders, and a speech by Dr Katie Allen, Federal MP, on 'Reflecting on the relevance of the Uluru Statement from the Heart to all Australians'. The evening includes time for Q&A, music, and dance performances. Time: 6 - 9 pm. Attend in person at Armagh or online via Zoom. For more details and to register please see [here](#).

See all events

GET INVOLVED

## Volunteer with us

Initiatives of Change prides itself on being a big family, nationally and internationally, and there are several ways you can get involved. You are welcome to join our monthly meetings or participate in an upcoming program or event. These are continuing online, and are a great way to connect with our work!

There are a variety of ways to volunteer, depending on your skills and where we have a need. If you are interested, please [contact us](#) to learn about current volunteer and internship opportunities at Initiatives of Change Australia. We'd love to hear from you!

DONATE



With the launch of the new trust building project, 'Our Uluru Response', IofC Australia is focusing our fundraising efforts on ensuring that work can roll out in as many communities as possible around Australia. We have seed funding but more is needed. You can help by registering for the 19 March event, either in person or online, and making a suggested contribution of \$20 or more.

**Every donation**, large or small will go towards supporting truth telling and truth hearing events around Australia. You can donate [here](#) or contact the [Treasurer](#) to send a cheque or make a bank transfer. Thank you—we value your support

so much!

Donate Now



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