

FFMPU 2000 to 2015 – A short history

Prepared by Emmanuel Kassiotis to mark 15 years of operation of FFMPU.

2000

- Establishment of FFMPU 24 September
- Funding was initially for 12 months
- Leonie Jacques appointed as Senior Project Officer
- Implementation of Interagency forum on a quarterly basis (this forum still exists today)

2001

- Mission Australia successful in the tender for the FFMPU telephone service – two staff appointed
- FFMPU funds first research study completed by the Hunter Institute looking at counselling support: *It's the Hope that Hurts: Best Practice in Counselling Models Relevant to Families and Friends of Missing Persons*, Waring (2001)

2002

- Rachel Landers from SBS films a documentary on missing shown in four segments
- Research by Hunter Institute is pivotal in the creation of a direct counselling position within FFMPU
- Mission Australia operates 24 hours, 7 days with eight staff members and over 100 trained volunteers
- FFMPU supports family members affected by Bali bombings

2003

- In May 2003 Carolyn Blyth commences in the counsellor position – business hours are now 9am-5pm
- Community awareness campaigns initiated include the Easter show, camping and caravan shows and advertising at NRL games
- Leonie Jacques awarded a Churchill fellowship
- FFMPU funded a joint publication with MHA titled *Someone is missing*

2004

- Counselling position receives funding for a further 12 month period – Sarah Wayland commences in position
- FFMPU funds *Missing Link*, a new telephone support group, facilitated by Mission Australia
- FFMPU develops a wallet-sized trigger card to assist families
- FFMPU invited to train new police recruits at the Police Academy in Goulburn – a family member is also invited to talk about their experience (this continues to present day)
- Legislation regarding managing the financial affairs of missing persons enacted following the negotiation and advocacy of the Flint family
- Pauline, Lindsay and Ellen Flint appear on the Andrew Denton show *Enough Rope*

2005

- FFMPU, in liaison with relevant agencies, responds to those affected by the Asian Tsunami
- The counselling position is made permanent
- Ellen Flint publishes *Every Eighteen Minutes*
- Sarah Wayland is awarded a Churchill Fellowship
- Selected FFMPU publications are translated into other languages and available on FFMPU website
- Launch of *A Glimmer of Hope*
- Bernie Brown commences in the counselling position in November

2006

- The DVD *Missing* is officially launched
- The Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) successfully tenders for research into better understanding the reasons people go missing
- Lee Purches commences in role of Senior Project Officer in July

2007/08

- FFMPU moves to Parramatta
- In May 2007 Niki Ferrar begins in the counselling position
- NMPCC launches framework developed by Sarah Wayland – *Supporting those left behind: the counselling framework to support families of missing persons*

2009

- FFMPU hosts first Family Forum – this has become an annual event and relevant guest speakers connected to missing persons issues are invited to provide information and meet with families
- Stephanie Dartnall joins the team in February 2009

2010

- Manny Kassiotis joins the team in February 2010
- Liz Davies commences in the Senior Project Officer position in May 2010
- FFMPU group work program commences
- The Rosewall family plays an integral part in the submission to the Victorian Law Reform Commission's review of Victorian guardianship laws – *Safe Keeping: A guide to managing the affairs of missing persons*

2011

- FFMPU group work program evolves into information sessions
- Stacey Tuffin joins the team (locum)
- FFMPU launches its first two regional groups in Queanbeyan and Wollongong
- Liz Davies and Manny Kassiotis attend the ADEC conference in Miami meeting Pauline Boss
- FFMPU supports family members impacted by the earthquake in Christchurch

2012

- A national conference of missing persons is held at Griffith University (the first one since 1995)
- *In the Loop* – a group for young people established
- FFMPU establishes a third regional group in Newcastle
- Liz Davies presents at the ADEC conference in Atlanta

2013

- Family members and young people from across NSW begin making a memory quilt for their missing loved one
- Liz Davies presents at the VOC conference in Adelaide
- FFMPU staffing levels increase to three permanent full-time staff members
- The 1st International Conference on Missing Children and Adults is held in Portsmouth, UK – Liz Davies presents
- Catherine Valenzuela joins FFMPU (Locum)
- FFMPU Facebook page launched in September, with a national and international reach

2014

- FFMPU officially launches three new publications:
 - *The Quilt Companion Book*
 - *The Coronial Guide*
 - *Missing People: A guide for family members and service providers*
- Jean Marshall joins the FFMPU team (Locum)
- FFMPU supports family members impacted by airline disasters

2015

- Belgium hosts the Second International Conference on Missing Children and Adults
 - Liz Davies presents at this conference in July
- Ongoing projects include: *Student survey – Options for support*; and the *Group Work Manual*
- The *Tree of Life* message board is unveiled at Parliament House
- *Missing People: A guide for family members and service providers*, and *In the Loop: Young people talking about missing* translated into French for the Canadian audience

Key achievements

- Continued support for over 2,500 individuals and families in Australia and overseas since 2003
- Coordinated and facilitated over 60 support groups since 2010

Research

- Liz Davies PhD candidate, ACU –
 - *In the Loop: Identifying and responding to the psychosocial support needs of children and young people when a loved one is missing*
- Stephanie Dartnall PhD candidate, CSU –
 - *The Missing Perspective: The coronial investigation of suspected deaths and the impact on families of missing people*

Contact details

For further information about this material or other topics, please call us on:

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