**Angels Gather Here**

<http://angelsgatherhere.com.au/>

<https://www.facebook.com/angelsgatherherefilm/>

<http://www.limelightcreativemedia.com.au/>

**Running time: 49 mins**

**Key Credit List**

**Director, Cinematographer, Editor**

Ian Hamilton

**Producer**

Ian Hamilton

Dr Anna Kelly

**Associate Producer**

Jacki Trapman

**Editors**

Jonathan Burrows

Paul McDonald

**Consultant Editor**

Harriet Clutterbuck ASE

**Associate Producer**

Jacki Trapman

**Production Manager**

Kate Turnbull

**Production Assistants**

Greer Wilton

Sam Newman

Noah Hamilton

**Sound Recording**

Kate Turnbull

Sam Newman

Anna Kelly

**Assistant Camera**

Kate Turnbull

Sam Newman

Anna Kelly

**Still Photography**

Ian Hamilton

The Trapman Family

**Additional CC Photography**

State Records Authority of NSW

Virtual Steve

**Original Score**

Nicolette Boaz

**Guitars, Mandolin**

Paul Mason

**Harmonica**

Brett Hunt

**Keys**

Nicolette Boaz

**Music Engineer**

Richard Valdez

**“Follow the Sun”**

Written and Performed by Xavier Rudd

Courtesy of Sony/ATV Music Publishing

**Distributors**

Ronin Films

**Special thanks to the Trapman family and friends and the town of Brewarrina**.

**‘Angels Gather Here’ Synopsis**

Tag Line

Goin’ home’s never easy.

One Line

‘Angels Gather Here’ is the inspirational story of Jacki Trapman’s battle with grief, loss and addiction to become a university-educated leader in her community.

One paragraph

‘Angels Gather Here’ is the inspirational story of Jacki Trapman’s battle with grief, loss and addiction to become a university-educated leader in her community.

The film offers a unique insight into the effects of intergenerational trauma and how the ripple effect of past government policy continues to impact on First Nations Peoples.

One page

‘Angels Gather Here’ follows Jacki Trapman’s journey back to her hometown of Brewarrina to celebrate her parents’ 60th Wedding Anniversary.

Going home is never easy for Jacki. Amidst the family celebrations she reflects on her own personal struggle to survive grief, loss and addiction to become the strong Ngemba woman she is today.

As the story unfolds we learn of Jacki’s mother Barbara who was among the stolen generation, taken from her mother at the age of 6. How she survived the Cootamundra Girls home and was forced to work as a ‘slave’ in Sydney’s North Shore, only to return home as a young woman struggling to retain her identity. How she met and later married Bill Trapman at the   
Brewarrina mission. And how the couple worked hard to raise nine children on the meagre handouts paid to Aboriginal workers.

Jacki also shares stories of the ancient culture of her ancestors, the Ngemba people of Brewarrina. We learn of the town’s history as an Aboriginal inter-tribal meeting place and of Baiame’s Ngunnhu, the traditional Aboriginal stone fish traps which at 40,000 years old, is recognised as among the oldest man-made structures in the world.

Jacki also reveals some of the town’s recent two hundred year history and the struggle of her people post colonisation to retain their unique culture.

“They tried to take our culture away from us but it still exists in the small towns like Bre all over Australia. Our culture is not dead you just have to come here and see it.” Jacki laments.

As they gather for the 60th Anniversary celebration, the Trapman family share their stories, much like their ancestors have done for thousands of years. Women prepare the food, grandkids decorate the tables and the men dig a huge barbecue pit as they reflect on the achievements of their beloved elders, Aunty Barbara and Uncle Bill. Jacki explains “It’s always great to come home. I mean, you know Aboriginal people, a lot of them don’t live till they’re sixty let alone being married for sixty years. So, it’s gonna be a big celebration**.”**

Ultimately ‘Angels Gather Here’ is an inspirational story of hope and survival.

The film celebrates the courage and determination of Jacki Trapman and her family, offering a unique insight into the effects of intergenerational trauma and how the ripple effect of government policy continue to impact on First Nations Peoples across Australia.

**Director’s Statement**

When I first met Jacki Trapman, I was blown away by her blinding honesty.

Her dream of sharing her own, very personal struggles and successes in life in the hope of inspiring others was such an amazing vision, that I wanted to be a part of telling her story. And was privileged to do so.

As Jacki introduced me to her family and elderly parents in Brewarrina and I learnt more about her family history, I was struck by the family’s dignity, resilience and sense of humour in the face of adversity. I learnt that Bill and Barbara raised nine children on the outskirts of their small country town and battled to survive on the meagre wages paid to Aboriginal shearers. I also learnt something of Barbara’s history, stolen at six years of age and taken to the Cootamundra Girls Home before being moved to North Sydney to work as a slave for a doctor and his wife. How she was allowed to return home at the age of 18 where she soon married Bill on the Brewarrina mission. And how they’d survived 60 years of marriage.

I wanted to juxtapose Jacki’s parents’ amazing achievement of 60 years of marriage with the average life expectancy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Australia.

Through Jacki’s extended family, I also wanted to explore in human terms how intergenerational trauma continues to have a profound effect on the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as reflected in the third world living standards, the gap in health and education and high incarceration rates.

The ripple effects of government assimilation policies and the trauma of the stolen generations are sobering facts of history, which continue to impact First Nations Peoples.

Knowing some of this history, I find it hard to understand the lack of empathy from some Australians, conservative commentators and politicians who are happy to celebrate Australia Day and ANZAC day but would rather forget the history of Aboriginal people’s struggle to survive post colonisation. Australians who make judgements like “Why don’t they just get over it” typify the ignorance and racism that still permeates mainstream Australia.

As Jacki explains, “Many non-Aboriginals judge us but they don’t want to look at the past and why we sometimes struggle with our lives”.

I believe if we are to have meaningful reconciliation in this country then we need to own all of our history; the good, the bad and the ugly. It was my intent when making the film to address the ignorance of many Australians who do not look at the past and its’ effect on the present.

Collaborating with Jacki on this film has been an amazing learning experience for me and it has been a real privilege to work together. Her bravery in telling her story moved the issue of reconciliation from an intellectual space into the heart and is what makes the film so powerful.

Our hope is that the film will add in some positive way to a meaningful discussion, dialogue and reconciliation in this country.

**Review by CEO of Samaritans, Brad Webb**

Watching ‘Angels Gather Here’ was an incredibly humbling and moving experience. There were a number of poignant scenes in the film, particularly where Jacki said goodbye to Bill and Barb on her return to Newcastle, where you quite simply moved me to tears.

The incredible value of the film lies in its ability to move the issue of reconciliation from an intellectual, head-based space into the heart. Watching the film brought the impact colonisation has had on Aboriginal people into real human terms, and makes it impossible to walk away without feeling an intense need to be a part of reconciliation.

I look forward to sharing this film with others, and reiterate my gratitude to Jacki for sharing her story, and to you and Anna for bringing that story to life.

**Biography**

**Ian Hamilton  
Director - Limelight Creative Media  
BA Communications**

Ian graduated from Newcastle University in 1989 with a degree in Communications studying film, photography and public relations.

Over the last 20 years he has worked on numerous documentary and drama programs for Film Australia and the ABC including Australian Story, Wildside, Bordertown, Police Rescue, GP, Water Rats, McLeod’s Daughters, Heartbreak High, and the BBC series Soldier Soldier.

Other credits include the Australian feature films Rabbit Proof Fence, Parklands, The Nostradamus Kid, Me Myself and I, Bootmen, Diana and Me, Billie’s Holiday and Bad News Bachelors.

In 2000, Ian and his wife/co-producer Anna Kelly returned to the Hunter Valley and founded Limelight Films to produce films and content that supported their passion for health and education promotion in the community.

In 2006, Ian and Anna produced the feature documentary “Honeymoon in Kabul.” The film was screened on the ABC in 2009 and won the US Zero Film Awards LA and New York Audience Choice Award. The film raised $20,000 in charity screenings for Afghan children and is now distributed internationally for television broadcast.

Recently, Ian collaborated with ABC’s Australian Story on a number of projects including producing and shooting documentary sequences for “Call of Duty” a documentary screened on ABC TV in 2013. The film follows whistle blower policeman Peter Fox and his fight against police corruption and clergy sexual abuse. The program attracted over 1.2 million viewers nationally.

Ian has also lectured in film and television production at UON and supervised a number of AFTRS productions.

His still photography has been published in numerous magazines and books including Vogue Living, Australian Country style, Instyle, Culture and Hunter Lifestyle. He has also won national awards in fashion photography.

**Awards/Nominations/Film Festivals**  
2006 US Zero Film Festival Awards LA and New York: Honeymoon in Kabul

Audience Choice Awards: Honeymoon in Kabul

2014 ATOM Award winner:

Best Instructional Training Resource: Pain Management Network.

2017 Melbourne Documentary Film Festival: Angels Gather Here

2017 Real Film Festival: Angels Gather Here