



**Parents & Friends of Lesbians and Gays NSW Inc.
(Incorporating Western Sydney)**

February 2015 Newsletter VOLUME 18 – ISSUE 2

PFLAG NSW Inc. (Incorporating Western Sydney) meets on the **4th Saturday of every month.**

The next meeting will be:

Saturday, 28th February at 2pm in the Conference Room, Wesley Lodge Motel. Wesley Lodge is situated at the corner of Hawkesbury & Queens Roads, Westmead, opposite Westmead Hospital and within walking distance of the railway station.

Car entry to the Wesley Lodge carpark is from Hawkesbury Rd via a boom gate.

For Information contact: Judy on (02) 9869 1454 Postal Address: PO Box 3751, Marsfield NSW 2122.
Email: jr_brown@bigpond.net.au

In This Issue:

[President's Report](#)

[Marriage Equality News](#)

[Camp Out 2015](#)

[Mini Gras](#)

[Fair Day](#)

[Mardi Gras Film Festival](#)

[Little Black Dress Run](#)

[PFLAG Family News](#)

[Regular Announcements](#)

[Dates for Your Diary](#)

[Contacts](#)

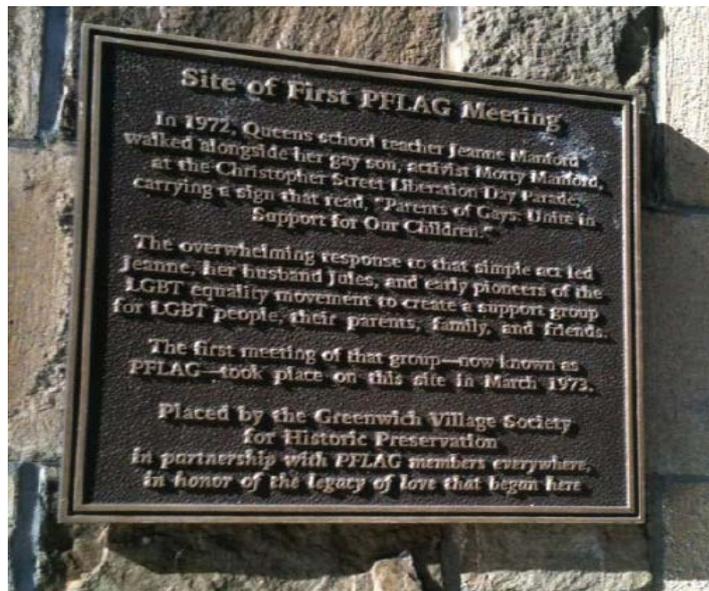
President's Report

"I hope for the day when it is entirely unremarkable when someone in political leadership heading a government is openly gay or lesbian or bisexual or otherwise." – ACT Chief Minister Andrew Barr.

Andrew Barr became the first openly-gay leader of an Australian jurisdiction when he was elected in December, 2014. He commented: ***"It is quite ironic that you can be elected Chief Minister but you can't marry your partner of 15 years. It's time that this discrimination is ended in this country and I will continue to be a loud and passionate voice for that change."***

We were saddened to hear on January 18 of the death of Paul O'Grady. Paul became the first openly-gay member of the NSW Parliament when, as a member of the Legislative Council, he announced on television in June, 1990, that he was homosexual. Ray and I had met Paul on a couple of occasions and he was very supportive of PFLAG. Heather Horntvedt, PFLAG founder in Australia, tells us that she worked alongside Paul in the early nineties and that he was such a nice and brave person. Ray and I attended his funeral at Sacred Heart Church, Darlinghurst on January 22. The service was a wonderful tribute to Paul and the pioneering work he did on changing attitudes to GLBTI law reform. The church was packed and politicians from both sides of State and Federal parliament were in attendance, with Senator John Faulkner delivering a most inspirational eulogy.

Thank you to Gillian for forwarding on this wonderful piece of memorabilia from her young friend, Michelle. As Michelle was wandering around New York City on the Lower West Side, she happened to pass by the "Little Church of the Village", where the first PFLAG meeting was held in 1973, and came upon this plaque, which had only been up on its wall for a few months. Very special!



This year will mark the 20 year anniversary of PFLAG in Western Sydney, founded in Parramatta in 1995 by current PFLAG committee member, Mollie Smith. I had a call from Parramatta Sun journalist, Vanessa Watson, who had recalled this fact from talks I had held with her late last year. She is intending to publicise this milestone as well as PFLAG's advocacy for Marriage Equality by conducting interviews with Mollie & Geoff Thomas this week. We look forward to seeing the story.

Thanks to Ruth, who attended the first planning meeting for IDAHOT day in the Blue Mountains last week.

[Return to top](#)

Congratulations to Geoff Thomas for achieving more than the required numbers to allow the screening of the film “The Case Against 8” to go ahead at Event Cinemas, Parramatta last Wednesday, February 11, in order to bring the “Marriage Equality” issue to Sydney’s west. Thanks also to Geoff for giving publicity to PFLAG at the event. Thanks to Gaspar for his initiative in taking a group photo at the event and posting on the PFLAG Sydney Facebook page.



This monumental documentary is truly inspirational and will turn the tide on “Marriage Equality”.

It now appears that the Supreme Court in the US is prepared to end the discrimination and recognise Marriage Equality at Federal Level. After Same-Sex Marriage became legal in Alabama, President Obama said: *“The US Supreme Court is about to make a shift, having a critical mass of states that have recognised Same-Sex Marriage, it doesn’t make sense to have a patchwork system and same-sex couples should have the same rights as anybody else.”*

Ray and I attended the Surry Hills Police Community Engagement meeting, held at Parliament House on Thursday, February 5. It was well attended by police officers, policy advisors, including police visitors from China, studying Transgender policies, GLBTI support organisations, Mardi Gras and council representatives and the Independent Member for Sydney, Alex Greenwich.

Our contingent for the 2015 Mardi Gras is now full at 100 people. We do have a number on the waiting list at present, so if you are no longer able to march, please let us know ASAP. Ray & I attended the Briefing Day on Sunday, where we learned that the theme this year is “Passion” and that the focus will be on homophobia – in sport, in the workplace and in schools.

The PFLAG float has been chosen to lead the youth in the latter section of the Parade. The 2015 Mardi Gras Parade will be televised on SBS 1 on Sunday night, March 8 @ 8.30pm.

Our January meeting was very well attended. I’d like to thank the committee and all those members who came back to offer support to those parents just embarking on their journey. Thanks to Ruth for facilitating the meeting for us.

I hope to see many of you at Fair Day on February 22 or at the family meeting on February 28, for as Rudy always says: *“When you don’t need PFLAG anymore, that’s when PFLAG needs **you** to help others!”*

Judy

[Return to top](#)

Marriage Equality News



#EqualityCalling: Record Your Message of Support for Marriage Equality!

Australian Marriage Equality (AME) and **Ben & Jerry's** have announced a new campaign to show Federal MPs just how many of their constituents support marriage equality.

As part of the **'Say I DOugh'** campaign, the new initiative dubbed **#EqualityCalling** will encourage voters who support marriage equality to record a message that will be automatically delivered to their federal representatives. Many MPs claim that the issue of Marriage Equality isn't important to their constituents as they receive few phone

calls on the topic; Ben & Jerry's and AME wanted to facilitate a mass voice-mail petition that would send messages of support directly to local politicians and Senators.

The #EqualityCalling phone box will debut at Mardi Gras' famous Fair Day on Sunday 22 February with those attending encouraged to leave a voicemail for their local MP. Those unable to attend Fair Day can still have their say and leave their messages of support by calling 1300 663 679.

Support for Marriage Equality on Blue Mountains City Council

Thanks to Ruth for forwarding this information from Blue Mountains City Councilor, Romola Hollywood:

"The following is an urgency motion that was put to the Blue Mountains City Council Meeting on Tuesday, January 27. Apart from 2 abstentions, the motion was passed unanimously.

Building on Blue Mountains City Council's initiatives including its Relationship Declaration Register, which recognises the partnership status of same-sex and mixed-sex couples, and its ongoing support for IDAHOT (International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia):

- that the Council adopts the following Marriage Equality Proclamation
- that the Council confirms its support of Senator Leyonhjelm's Freedom to Marriage Bill currently before the Federal Parliament
- that Council writes to the Federal Member for Macquarie Louise Markus and Senator Doug Cameron urging their support of this Bill.

Proclamation:

We believe that marriage between two loving and committed adults, regardless of gender and sexuality, deserves to be celebrated, validated and acknowledged.

We believe that when people's love is not recognised by law, it is that law that needs to change.

We believe our elected leaders have a responsibility to protect the rights of all citizens.

We believe that Marriage Equality is about human rights and respect.

We believe in celebrating diversity and inclusion in our society.

We, of Blue Mountains City Council, proclaim our support for Marriage Equality.

It's time for legislation to support Marriage Equality.

[Return to top](#)

Camp Out 2015: Supporting LGBTIQ Youth

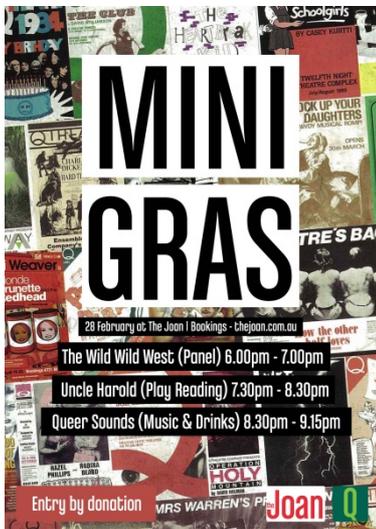
Any interested LGBTIQ youth people, aged 13-17 are invited to attend Camp Out, happening in the school holidays (April 13th - 17th, 2015).

It is well evidenced that LGBTIQ youth face higher rates of bullying and other social barriers, and with that in mind we aim to create a space for LGBTIQ youth to feel safe, encouraged and celebrated in their difference. The Camp Out program includes a variety of art, sporting, team and community building activities, workshops and discussion sessions.

Camp Out is a not-for-profit incorporated association made up of teachers and community and youth workers. We are trained and supported by Twenty10 (www.twenty10.org.au), a statewide community organisation who work with and support LGBTIQ youth. We have a group of registered psychologists and case workers who attend Camp and can support young people experiencing difficulties. Camp Out has a policy of inclusion, which means that no one will be turned away for lack of funds.

A registration form can be downloaded from the website (www.campout.org.au). Return registration forms can be sent to PO BOX 364, Enmore, 2042 or scanned and emailed to info@campout.org.au. A Parent/Guardian Info Day will be held on Sunday, March 15th, 2015 from 2- 4pm at Twenty 10, Level 1, 45 Chippendale St. Chippendale.

Mini Gras: A Taste of the Film Festival at the Joan



MINI GRAS is a night to gather, to listen, to speak and to be heard. While the Mardi Gras festival burns brightly in the inner city the Joan will play host to a small spark of creative energy designed to engage the LGBTI community of Western Sydney and our allies.

New writings will make their way to open readings, local musicians will share the songs they love to share and community leaders will discuss, debate and debunk some of the mythologies around what it means to be 'out' and out West.

6.00 – 7.00pm: The Wild Wild West: Panel Discussion

7.30 – 8.30: Uncle Harold (the Naked Young Man): Play Reading

8.30 – 9.15: Queer Sounds: John Milligan, Musician & Musical Theatre Maker

[Return to top](#)

Fair Day 2015: PFLAG Booth

Fair Day is traditionally the Mardi Gras' season's biggest day-time event. Each year PFLAG has a stall that reaches out to the community, providing information, brochures and booklets.

It is also a major fundraising opportunity for PFLAG NSW. This year, we will have for sale our rainbow fold-up umbrellas, kites, neck lanyards, loom bands, PFLAG badges, caps, T-shirts and our DVD "Bouncing Castle".

Jason Lancett of SEIKO has very kindly donated a beautiful SEIKO watch, pictured below, for our raffle prize this year.



Tickets are \$2 each, \$5 for 3, \$10 for 7, \$20 for 15.

Helpers are still needed!

Come for a couple of hours or for the day and enjoy the camaraderie, and the chance to talk about PFLAG.

We need people power to help set up the stall early on the Sunday morning (say 8.30 am – the parking is usually pretty good at that time) and also to help dismantle the stall about 3.30-4 pm.

Please phone Judy on 9869 1454 to register your enthusiasm and your willingness to assist.

Mardi Gras Film Festival

Queer Screen is pleased to be playing a great lesbian film, LYLE, at Mardi Gras Film Festival, Feb 19th to March 5th.

Details:

LYLE

20 Feb 2015, 9.00pm

Leah and June are a happy couple, until strange things start to happen at home. The exquisite Gaby Hoffmann (Transparent) plays Leah, who attempts to uncover the secrets and supernatural occurrences around her.

http://tix.queerscreen.org.au/session_mgff.asp?sn=Lyle&s=8

Andrew Barnard

Festival Production & Office Administrator

Queer Screen

[Return to top](#)

Website www.pflagaustralia.org.au Email info@pflagaustralia.org.au
Meeting held 4th Saturday of each month

Charity Event: The Little Black Dress Run!

Supporting children living with HIV – March 1 @ Darling Harbour

The Sydney Frontrunners in association with Mardi Gras are conducting the Little Black Dress Run on Sunday, March 1 @ 11am @ Darling Harbour. It raises funds for Sydney Children's Hospital Camp Goodtime, which supports kids living with HIV. "We're frocking up for the kids!"

<http://littleblackdressrun2015.gofundraise.com.au/cms/home>



PFLAG Family News: Congratulations!



Hearty congratulations to our wonderful president Judy and her husband Ray, on the safe arrival of their 5th grandchild – a dear little girl, Lucia Marley. Lucia was born to Judy & Ray's younger daughter, Karin and her husband Gavin, and is a beautiful little sister to Axel and Raffi. All the Brown family are excited and very thankful.

[Return to top](#)

Regular Announcements

PFLAG Apparel

We now have for sale: PFLAG T-shirts @ \$25 each and white PFLAG caps @ \$10 each. We also have rainbow umbrellas and kites @ \$15 each or 2 for \$25 and rainbow lanyards and PFLAG badges @ \$3 each or 2 for \$5. Contact Judy on 9869 1454 or see us at the meetings.

Civil Marriage Celebrant

Rev Robert Clark from Metropolitan Community Church of the Good Shepherd, Granville, is a Civil Marriage Celebrant. You can check out his website: www.weddingswithflair.net

Renewal Notice Reminder

Please do not forget to renew your membership for 14/15! Thanks to all the members who have renewed already. If you joined after 30 June 2014, you are deemed to be financial until end of 2015.

Email Addresses

If you are on email, please help us reduce our costs by sending us an email with your details (which will remain confidential) and all future information will be emailed to you.

Diary Dates

Mardi Gras Fair Day

Sunday 22nd February, 10am – 8pm
Victoria Park, Camperdown (opposite Sydney University)
<http://www.mardigras.org.au/events/fair-day/>

Mardi Gras Parade

Saturday 7th March
<http://www.mardigras.org.au/event-category/parade/>

Mardi Gras Film Festival

19th February – 5th March
Event Cinemas, George Street, Sydney
<http://queerscreen.org.au/mgff/>

PFLAG Family Meetings

February 28th

March 28th

April 25th: CANCELLED due to ANZAC Day

[Return to top](#)

Contacts:

PFLAG Penrith: Carol 02 47354680

PFLAG Northside: Maree 02 8959 2830 or 0414 386 927

PFLAG Blue Mountains: Ruth & Ron Green 02 4757 4864

PFLAG Central Coast: Helen 0431 863 799 pflag.nsw.centralcoast@gmail.com

PFLAG Northwest: Val Harris 02 6769 7552 or Fay Heywood 02 6785 7325

PFLAG Wagga Wagga: Cheryl Harvey 0439 488 202 cheryl28june@gmail.com

PFLAG Bathurst: Tony and Bernadette Sutton 02 6331 7267 nottus2@bigpond.com

PFLAG Albury Wodonga: Sarah 0419 019 254 pflagalburywodonga@gmail.com

PFLAG Great Lakes/Manning: Greg & Lauranne Byrne 0427 918 568
gregbyrne3@bigpond.com

PFLAG Coffs Harbour: Leanne: pflagcoffs@gmail.com

PFLAG Newcastle/Hunter: Michelle Lancey pflag.hunter@gmail.com

