



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

## **March - April 2015 Newsletter VOLUME 18 – ISSUE 3**

PFLAG NSW Inc. (Incorporating Western Sydney) meets on the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday of every month.

The next meeting will be:

**Saturday 28th March 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.

**PLEASE NOTE: There will be no meeting in April due to ANZAC Day.**

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## President's Report

***"It's getting harder and harder to justify opposing same-sex marriage in Australia. Is this really the business of government in today's day and age? I'd argue no."*** - WA Liberal Senator Dean Smith, SMH News Review, 21/2/15

The tragic death, in the Lindt café siege, of manager, Tori Johnson, leaving behind his male partner of 14 years, caused the openly gay WA senator to rethink his opposition to marriage equality. *"The reality is that if they had wanted to get married, that opportunity was denied to them until the day of the siege and is now lost to them because Tori Johnson is no longer here. When that dawned on me I was overcome with a lot of sadness because that's something I could help correct", he said.*

When the time is right, Senator Dean Smith wants Liberal MPs to be allowed a conscience vote, so that those who back gay marriage can support it.

I don't know whether many of you were able to view "Our Gay Wedding: The Musical", screened on ABC2 @ 9.30pm on February 25. If it screens again, it's a must see! As Bridget McManus wrote in the SMH: *"If ever there was a compelling argument for legalising same-sex marriage, this is it. If only every wedding were as passionate, heartfelt and thoroughly entertaining as that of composer Benjamin Till and actor Nathan Taylor, who got married in Britain on March 29, 2014, the first day that same-sex marriage became legal in England and Wales."*

Co-incidentally that was the day that our son, Steve and his partner, Stephen chose for their wedding in Sydney, so it is coming up for their 1<sup>st</sup> Wedding Anniversary, with unfortunately no legal recognition.

***"This is the one day of the year when members of the gay community can temporarily take over the streets, join family and friends in celebration and not feel second-class."*** – Former High Court Judge Michael Kirby in 2009.



Michael Kirby was speaking of course about Mardi Gras, a night that is not just a very special one for the GLBTI community, but also for their advocates, their families and friends. Mardi Gras on March 7 allowed us to demonstrate our love and support for our gay children, family members and friends and also for all the many gay people out there, who may not have the support of their families.

We were very fortunate this year to have our Western Sydney PFLAG founder, Mollie Smith, walk all the way with us, embracing hundreds of young and not so young gay people along the route, who were reaching out with outstretched arms

to her. I witnessed tears roll down the cheeks of one young male security volunteer, as Mollie hugged him.

It was great to have interstate and regional PFLAG members walk with us, including Shelley Argent, our National Spokesperson and members from Brisbane, the Sutton Family and friends from Bathurst, the Byrne Family from Great Lakes/Manning, Michelle Lancey from Newcastle, the Hinton Family and members from the ACT as well as supporters from Sydney.



*From left: PFLAG NSW President Judy Brown, PFLAG Western Sydney founder Mollie Smith and PFLAG National Spokesperson Shelley Argent in the Mardi Gras contingent*

Thank you to all the members who worked so hard to bring our contingent together. To Les and Sue for taking responsibility for the vehicle/float and transportation of materials, to Narelle for all the communications with Mardi Gras and for providing a sumptuous afternoon tea/supper, to Jeff for his generosity with transport, management of the contingent and photography, to Ray for his assistance with the float and photography, to Gaspar for the photos, to Ruth & Ron for coming down to assist in Hyde Park and to all the other generous members who assisted us on the night. Well done ALL!



There was a lot of media publicity for PFLAG around Mardi Gras this year. After Mollie's interview with Vanessa Watson in the Parramatta Sun on February 10, where she was featured with Geoff Thomas, she did an interview with John Donegan for ABC 702 Online, which was posted on February 26. Here Mollie is quoted as saying:

*"I thought years ago when I started, in twenty years' time we won't need something like PFLAG, but we do, unfortunately."*



The morning after Mardi Gras, Sunday, March 8, Mollie was featured on Channel 7's Sunrise program and Sue & Les and their family were interviewed for the SBS Mardi Gras presentation on Sunday night, March 8. You can view these wonderful interviews on our PFLAG Sydney facebook page. Thank you to Helen from Central Coast PFLAG and Gaspar for posting the great videos, features and photos.

Gillian & Jean-Pierre and Ray & I were featured on the Channel 10 news on Friday night, March 6 and Ray & I did an interview for 2SER Joy FM on Thursday, March 5. Ruth was featured in the Blue Mountains Gazette as part of the IDAHOT (International day against homophobia and transphobia) organising committee. Regarding the Blue Mountains Council flying the rainbow flag in Civic Place during the Mardi Gras festival, Ruth said: ***"It was reassuring to families who have children who are same-sex attracted to see the flag flying for the sixth year running."***

Ruth and Ron and Ray and I attended the Raising of the Rainbow Flag Ceremony and Reception at Sydney Town Hall on Friday, February 20<sup>th</sup>. The evening was also a celebration of 25 years of Gay and Lesbian Liaison Officers and 100 years of women in policing in NSW. There are now 176 GLLOs across NSW. Lord Mayor Clover Moore remarked: ***"These important symbols help to make clear that Sydney is an inclusive, welcoming, GLBTI friendly city and that we are proud supporters of the GLBTI community. Despite much progress, challenges remain including Marriage Equality and discrimination by educational institutions."***

The Member for Sydney, Alex Greenwich, says he will introduce a bill to the NSW Parliament in a bid to protect gay and lesbian teachers from discrimination in private schools. Private schools are exempt from discrimination law, but Mr Greenwich said that it wasn't acceptable in 2015 to have laws that allowed discrimination in employment on the basis of sexuality.

Ray and I were again privileged to be part of the panel, speaking to a group of 16 young gay men at ACON's Start Making Sense Program on February 24 at Surry Hills. We were asked lots of questions and were kept busy chatting to the young men during their supper break

Our February meeting was well attended. Thanks to all who came along to offer support to the three "new parents" and thanks to Ruth for facilitating the meeting for us. I hope to see many of you at our family meeting on March 28, for as Rudy always says: ***"When you don't need PFLAG anymore, that's when PFLAG needs **You** to help others!"***

Judy

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### Fair Day 2015

We had a very busy and successful day at Fair Day in Victoria Park on Sunday, February 22. We were very fortunate to have many willing helpers who gave out lots of info, chatted to the many visitors and raised \$1500 from the sale of our rainbow merchandise and raffle. Thanks to Margery and Wendy, who helped Narelle, Ray and I set up the stall and also brought Mollie along later, to Gaspar, Susana and family who also arrived very early to assist, to Adela for her inspirational idea of producing the very popular rainbow scrubbers and book marks, to Natalie, Gillian and JP, Louise, Les and Sue, who all worked tirelessly. You all did a fantastic job! The most important part of the day, I feel, is affirming gay people, who haven't experienced acceptance in their lives from their

families. Many thanks to Jason Lancett and SEIKO for their generous donation of the Sportura Chronograph Watch for our raffle prize, which was won by a very excited Judie Gardiner. - **Judy**

### **South Australian Adoption Act Review**

The South Australian Government is undertaking a review of the State's *Adoption Act 1988* and *Adoption Regulations 2004*. Currently, same-sex couples may not adopt in SA, as the *Act* requires the existence of a marriage (including de facto) for the granting of an adoption order. A previous Review of the Act (1994) "questioned the readiness of the community to accept alternative relationships and families".

Obviously, in the intervening 21 years, society has accepted and embraced families of all kinds and this is reflected in the fact that WA, NSW, Tasmania and the ACT allow same-sex couples to adopt children who are in need of a loving and secure home. Same-sex couples still cannot adopt in NT and Queensland. Rainbow families in these states are not afforded the legal protection of adoption and full parental rights.

The SA Parliament's Social Development Committee report, tabled 17<sup>th</sup> May 2011, recommended the introduction of legislation to amend the Adoption Act to extend the eligibility for adoption to same-sex couples. That recommendation was never acted upon.

Submissions to the Review are invited from any member of the public and **close Monday 30<sup>th</sup> March**. Visit:

<http://yoursay.sa.gov.au/yoursay/adoption-act-review> to read the guidelines on how to make your submission via email, online feedback form or post. A discussion paper is available at the site above and gives helpful tips on the issues the Government is looking for in submissions.

- **Natalie Cooper, Newsletter Editor**

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## Blue Mountains IDAHOT: Advance Notice



INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA, TRANSPHOBIA & BIPHOBIA

**MAY 17** A Worldwide Celebration of Sexual and Gender Diversities



Sunday, 17th May

11 am—11.30 am @ BM City Council

Rainbow flag raising

then march with Hands, Heart + Feet to  
more celebration activities

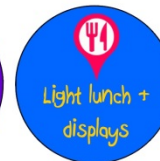
11.30 am—1.00 pm @ Carrington Square

IDAHOT speeches + music + food

Wet weather venue: Katoomba Community Hall (old library)



Blue Mountains IDAHOT 2015's committee is represented by:  
\* Blue Mountains City Council \* Blue Mountains Family Support  
Service \* Blue Mountains Women's Health & Resource Centre \*  
Mountains Outreach Community Service \* Parents Families  
Friends of Lesbians and Gays \* Pink Mountains \*



Join us for a flash mob dance at 1.00 pm—learn the moves  
@ [www.bmfss.org.au](http://www.bmfss.org.au)

## Queer Screen @ Riverside, Parramatta

Queer Screen is delighted to be returning to Riverside Theatres as we showcase highlights from the 2015 Mardi Gras Film Festival. Screening across March 27 – 29, we aim to bring Western Sydney a diverse range of fantastic LGBTIQ films.

Opening with the winner of the My Queer Career short film competition and the hilarious BFFs, co-starring Australian screen legend Sigrid Thornton.

Saturday features a fun double-header, with Boy Meets Girl a touching, funny, sex positive rom-com and the super camp, musical Waiting in the Wings.

Join us Sunday for another double-header and our closing night celebrations with the important documentary Out in the Night and the moving drama Tiger Orange, screened in association with The Aurora Group.

**Andrew Barnard**  
Festival Production & Office Administrator

[www.queerscreen.org.au](http://www.queerscreen.org.au)

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Meeting held 4th Saturday of each month

## Gayby Baby: World Premiere at the Hot Docs Film Festival!

The Australian documentary GAYBY BABY, directed by Maya Newell and produced by Charlotte Mars, has been selected to screen at Hot Docs, one of the world's most prestigious documentary festivals, from 23<sup>rd</sup> April – 3<sup>rd</sup> May in Toronto, Canada. GAYBY BABY is a feature documentary in which four kids take us into their homes and share what it's like growing up with same-sex parents.

View the Gayby Baby trailer here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=spO0mKq3vhc>

## Upcoming Events

**Pollys Club: Daisy Mae and the Pollys present "SOLID GOLD – BACK TO THE 80s!!!!"**  
**Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> April**

With a fabulous line up of songs, it promises to be a fab night. Break out your 80s gear – fluoro skirts, leg warmers, skinny ties and padded shoulders because there will be prizes for the best costume!

**See you all at Marrickville Town Hall, Saturday April 11th from 7pm until midnight!!**

To reserve table bookings, phone 9560 4736 or email [bookings@thepollysclub.com.au](mailto:bookings@thepollysclub.com.au)

**STELLA DOES BINGO: Fundraiser for MCC Good Shepherd Western Sydney Inc**  
**Friday May 29th 2015, 7pm Sharp.**



### **BOOKINGS ESSENTIAL:**

Individual or Tables of 8 to Robert Clark on:

0412 481 195 OR [lingling@ozemail.com.au](mailto:lingling@ozemail.com.au)

BYO alcohol, nibbles provided.

Great prizes and a fun night

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## 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](http://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

Upcoming family meetings:

- March 28<sup>th</sup>
- April 25<sup>th</sup>: CANCELLED due to ANZAC Day
- May 23<sup>rd</sup>
- June 27<sup>th</sup>

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**Contacts:**

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