



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

## **August 2015 Newsletter - VOLUME 18 – ISSUE 7**

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

The next meeting will be:

**Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> August 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](mailto:jr_brown@bigpond.net.au)

In This Issue:

[President's Report](#)

[Marriage Equality Events](#)

- [Sydney Equality Rally](#)
- [Parents' Visit to Canberra, 7<sup>th</sup> Sept](#)

[Sydney University Global Health & Wellbeing Survey](#)

[The Pinnacle Foundation Scholarships](#)

[Wear It Purple Day 2015](#)

[Spotlight on History](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

- [Parramatta Pride Picnic 27<sup>th</sup> September](#)
- [Queer Screen Film Fest 22<sup>nd</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> September](#)

[Regular Announcements](#)

[Dates for Your Diary](#)

[Contacts](#)

Website [www.pflagaustralia.org.au](http://www.pflagaustralia.org.au) Email [info@pflagaustralia.org.au](mailto:info@pflagaustralia.org.au)  
Meeting held 4th Saturday of each month

## President's Report

***"It's still a shocking thing really to me that as a person who has served on the highest court and served the country and been a good citizen, had a stable family life, family values, that I'm still a second class citizen in my own country."*** – Former High Court judge Michael Kirby AC, CMG.

It was very disappointing to hear that the Coalition Party Room on Tuesday, August 11, voted 2 to 1 to bind all members to vote against Marriage Equality. Especially, as it came in the wake of the findings of the respected polling company, Crosby/Textor, that 83% of Australians support a free vote on Marriage Equality and 72% of Australians support Marriage Equality. It would appear that many of our elected representatives are out of touch with the people.

It was wonderful to hear that Canberra Airport's new terminal had been lit up in rainbow colours to say "yes" to Marriage Equality for the return of the Parliamentarians on Monday morning. Canberra Airport's MD, Stephen Byron, has a brother, Tom Snow, who is gay and felt strongly about Tom's relationship not having the same recognition as his own. Tom said: ***"No-one should underestimate how much the legal right to marry matters to my husband, me and our three children. It matters to hundreds and thousands of gay Australians because it says: 'Your relationship is equal.' It matters to gay and lesbian young people, who for many years have grown up with the stigma and discrimination that homosexuality is somehow wrong."***

David Speers, in his "The Nation" program on Sky News on Thursday, August 13, interviewed panellist, Dr Cassandra Goldie, in her capacity as CEO of The Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS), leading with the question ***"How did this week impact gay and lesbian Australians?"*** Dr Goldie responded that ACOSS makes it very clear that urgent reform is needed tomorrow. She added that all the data has been collected, all the research has been carried out and part of the community is directly affected by ongoing legal discrimination, with high levels of suicide, drug and alcohol use and lifetime feelings of exclusion. ***"The discrimination is compelling!"*** she said. Then, Dr Goldie revealed that she and 2 of her 4 siblings were gay and in committed same-sex relationships. She disclosed that her brother and his partner had gone to South Africa to be married and while she was able to attend, she was unable to take her family with her to join in the celebration. She said she was personally bitterly disappointed with the Coalition vote and felt that more people would need to start telling their stories to demonstrate the impact that this issue is having on families. The emotion in Dr Goldie's voice was palpable, when she said she didn't want other young people going through the experience she'd had, where her father, due to confusion over ***"Is this OK or not?"***, refused to allow her to bring her partner home for a very long time.



There was a great turnout at the rally for Marriage Equality at Sydney Town Hall square on Sunday, August 9. Thanks to Reymon and Shaun for helping Ray and I hold up our beautiful gold sequined PFLAG banner, which was much photographed. Great friend of PFLAG, Mal McPherson, made an impassioned speech on behalf of Australian Marriage Equality, elegantly dressed in his dinner suit and bow-tie. The rally's organiser, Cat Rose, convenor of Community Action Against Homophobia, said: ***"It's beyond a joke that Ireland can have (marriage equality), that Texas can have it and yet we're still waiting."*** It was lovely to see Narelle's son,

Neil, looking very animated in his capacity as Auslan practitioner, interpreting for the Deaf community at the rally.

Ray and I will be attending an Australian Marriage Equality Forum and workshop for our electorate of Bennelong on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> August at Hunters Hill Hotel. We have written yet again to our local Federal member, Liberal MP John Alexander, urging him to vote in favour of a free vote on Marriage Equality. If you are able, please write to your local Federal member and explain how the issue impacts on your family.

I have been interviewed by our local newspaper, the Northern District Times, on the issue of Marriage Equality and it should be featured in the edition of August 19.

Geoff, Ray and I were given a very warm welcome at the lunchtime meeting of the LGBT Pride Network and Parent and Carers Network at the Bank of America/Merrill Lynch on Thursday, July 16. There were about 30 in attendance with 5 on conference call from the Melbourne branch. The members were very attentive and asked a number of questions afterwards. Very poignantly, one young man asked Ray if he could “hug” a dad.

Thanks to Ruth for her passionate speech on PFLAG’s behalf in supporting Councillor Hollywood’s IDAHOT report at the Blue Mountains City Council Meeting on July 21. Ruth accentuated the positive affect that the support of the council for IDAHOT has on the families of GLBTI people living in the Blue Mountains area. Many rose to applaud, including the Mayor, who was quite emotional, when he spoke to thank her.

Thanks to Ryan Mark, the producer of 2SER’s Gay Panic Radio program, for inviting Geoff Thomas and me to be guests on the program in July. The feature of the week was the gay experience in Western Sydney and I was interviewed on July 31 about my involvement with PFLAG and with the Parramatta Pride Picnic.

Thank you to Gillian and Jean-Pierre, who have offered to represent PFLAG at ACON’s 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reception on Tuesday evening, August 18 at the Strangers Function Room at NSW Parliament House. Ray and I will be attending the screening of the award-winning documentary, “Kumu Hina – A place in the middle”, presented by the UTS Pasifika Society and the Equity and Diversity Unit for their Diversity Week on the same evening.

Thank you to all who came along to our family meeting on July 25. As there were no new parents present, we had an interesting discussion, a nice afternoon tea and celebrated Mollie’s birthday.

Make sure that you put **Sunday, September 27**, in your diary, as it is the date for the annual **Parramatta Pride Picnic** @ the River Foreshore Reserve, Parramatta. It promises to be bigger and better than ever this year, with much more entertainment and food choices. PFLAG will have a stall at the picnic, so if you are available to assist, please call Judy on 9869 1454. It is a family picnic, with plenty of activities for kids, such as face-painting and games, as well as for the adults and for the 4-legged friends, there’s Doggywood. More details on flyer later in newsletter.

I hope to see many of you at our family meeting on August 22, 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](#)

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Meeting held 4th Saturday of each month

## Marriage Equality Events

### Sydney Equality Rally, 9<sup>th</sup> August

#### Speech given by Malcolm McPherson to the CAAH Rally for Marriage Equality. Sydney Town Hall

I keep turning up for a wedding - but each time, I am stood up by the Australian Government. Labor or Coalition, they leave me at the altar. I'm tired of turning up! I'm tired of waiting! It's time **to put the bill and pass the bill**. Thank you for coming here today to support marriage equality. A big thanks particularly to our straight allies who are here to support us!

#### My name is Malcolm McPherson and I am here to recruit you!



Many of you would recognize that that is the way in which Harvey Milk began his speeches. I watched the film 'Milk' during the week. While much has changed, much has not. The core issues are still the same. Are our relationships equally valid and valuable? Are we valuable as people? In the film I was struck that Anita Bryant, the anti-gay campaigner, declared her love for homosexuals. We have heard the same this year – earlier from the Catholic bishops and this week from Brian Houston, Pastor of Hillsong. Brian Houston is explicit. We are welcome in his church but we are unworthy to take up leadership positions. We are second rate. We are defective. We are welcome if we sit quietly at

the back of the church. **We can do without this conditional and judgmental love!** Transgender, intersex, lesbian, bisexual and gay – they would have us all keep to the back of the bus. We may not always want to sit at the front of the bus – but we deserve the right to choose.

**What we need is the GENUINE and unconditional love** of those who have taken the time to really know us. And that is what I want to talk about today.

#### I am here to recruit you!

Harvey Milk wanted to recruit his audience to **come out** – to come out of the closet – to come out of hiding. It was important that straight people realize that they had gay family members, gay friends and gay work colleagues. However, we have moved on and most of us are out. Now we need to tell those close to us how it feels to be us, how it feels to be a second class citizen – at the back of the bus – and **HOW THEY CAN HELP US!**

What I want to recruit you to do is to **speak out** and tell friends, family and work colleagues why marriage equality is important to you – and **ask** them to **call, write** and **visit** their MP on your behalf. Many of your relatives, friends and work colleagues live in outer Sydney and rural and regional areas. Our politicians need to know that this is more than just an inner city issue!

The next fortnight is critical for marriage equality in Australia. In fact the next week is critical. **We are sooo close!** But our opponents are fighting in a last desperate attempt to delay us if not to stop us. **We must not let them! We must not let them stop us! We must not let them delay!**

Speak to your **grandparents**. Your grandparents love you and all their grandchildren. Do they think it's ok that you are treated as being of less value than their other grandchildren? I doubt it. **Speak out** – and **ask** them to **call, write** and **visit** their MP on your behalf.

Speak to your **parents, to your aunts, uncles and cousins**. Are you of any less value than your cousins? **Speak out** – and **ask** them to **call, write** and **visit** their MP on your behalf.

Speak to your **friends and workmates**. **Speak out** – and **ask** them to **call, write** and **visit** their MP on your behalf.

**There is one another way you can help**. You can help Australian Marriage Equality speak out on your behalf. AME has prepared a series of positive television commercials. To have them receive as much air time as the fear based campaign of our opponents, we need money. Now is the time to give. Please go to the AME website, [australianmarriageequality.org](http://australianmarriageequality.org) and give generously.

Thank you again for being here today. Thank you for your passion and energy in support of Australian Marriage Equality! I've no doubt that we will win this. Let's pull out all stops to ensure the Australian parliament puts the bill, and passes the bill in the next few weeks!

### Parents' Visit to Canberra, 7<sup>th</sup> September

A number of PFLAG parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and other family members will be travelling to Canberra to meet with MPs on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> September to put the case for marriage equality. A bus will be leaving Sydney on Sunday afternoon and returning Monday evening. Accommodation has been arranged in self-contained apartments; a few places are still left on the bus and in the apartments. If you wish to take part, please email Shelley Argent as soon as possible at: [pgflagbris@bigpond.com](mailto:pgflagbris@bigpond.com).

### Sydney University Global Health and Wellbeing 2015 Survey

The Global Health & Wellbeing 2015 Survey is a multi-site international study that asks people (**16 years and older**) across five countries including Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and United States their views on health and wellbeing in the communities they live.

The aim of the survey is to improve global understanding of health and wellbeing, with a particular focus on men's health. It will be used to inform policy, research and education programs within the health and mental health sectors across each participating country and the world.

The survey is confidential, approved by the University's Ethics Committee and will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. Input from LGBTIQ people is most welcome and will be invaluable in helping form education that will impact positively for the community. The survey can be found at:

<https://www.globalhwsurvey.com/home/#!overview>

[Return to top](#)

## The Pinnacle Foundation Scholarships – Applications Now Open



The Pinnacle Foundation was established and exists to provide support for young LGBTIQ people who find themselves without the financial and mentoring support to achieve their educational and career goals. Pinnacle aims to give young LGBTIQs the chance to achieve their full potential.

*“The sudden and complete withdrawal of both financial and emotional support of my parents was a direct response to the realisation on their part that I had a partner who was a female. I was in a situation with little savings, having been unprepared for the events which took place... I must now work almost full time hours in hospitality in conjunction with a full time study load in order to put myself in a financially viable situation.”* **21 year old Lesbian applicant**

With the support of individual and corporate sponsors, such as the Commonwealth Bank, Pinnacle provides scholarships to 16-24 year old LGBTIQ\* students who desire to undertake full-time education at a public or private secondary school (final year) or public institution of higher education in Australia. It will be for the purpose of gaining an educational or vocational qualification in any profession, trade or the arts.

Scholarships will be granted for a period of one year and a **scholars application form needs to be submitted by 1 October each year**. However, an existing Scholarship holder is entitled to reapply for the Scholarship should they comply with the goals enshrined in The Pinnacle Foundation Criteria and Process Policy.

The Pinnacle Foundation has two Scholarships available each year:

- The Pinnacle Foundation Scholarship of \$3000 for the first year of tertiary studies and \$2000 for subsequent years. For Year 12 students the scholarship amount is \$2000; and
- Sponsored and Named Scholarships \$5,000 for first year of tertiary studies and \$3000 for subsequent years.

Application guidelines, information and forms are available at: <http://www.thepinnaclefoundation.org/>

Information about donating to The Pinnacle Foundation is also available on the site.

[Return to top](#)

## Wear It Purple Day 2015

### NSW Police Force “Wear It Purple” Event – Hyde Park South – Friday, August 28

“Wear It Purple Day” was initiated by two passionate and committed Australian students who decided to offer a positive response to the growing number of media reports of teenage suicides linked to homophobic bullying.

On Wear It Purple Day every year, police officers stand side by side with teachers, students, parents and community leaders because we all want to make sure that our youth can learn and prosper in a safe and supportive environment, whether within or outside the classroom.

Wearing something purple is just the beginning and indicates our professional and personal support for our youth. As more purple is seen at schools, in workplaces, on streets and online, we are saying to young people everywhere, you are not alone.

This year all police across NSW have permission to wear purple police shirts at Wear It Purple Day events on Friday, August 28. This attracts a lot of attention and raises community awareness.

This year we are hosting a Wear It Purple event in Hyde Park South, near the intersection of Elizabeth and Park Sts., Sydney. We have booked the NSW Police Band, a barbecue put on by the City of Sydney Council and plenty of GLLOs to engage in conversation. Be there by 11.30am if you would like to be a part of photo opportunities to be posted on social media and shared with as many people as possible.

- **Superintendent Tony Crandell, NSW Police Force Corporate Sponsor, Diverse Sexuality, Sex and Gender.**

**In 2014, More than 120 schools, 30 workplaces and 15 tertiary institutions and 22 community organisations** Australia-wide **WORE IT PURPLE** to show their support for rainbow young people.

Find out more, including what events are on around Sydney, buy supporters’ gear and donate at:

[www.wearitpurple.org](http://www.wearitpurple.org)



[Return to top](#)

## Spotlight on History: Willem Arondeus



**August 22<sup>nd</sup> 1894 – July 1<sup>st</sup> 1943**

Willem Arondeus was born in Naarden, North Holland and at the age of 17, left home after arguing with his parents about both his desire to become an artist, and his homosexuality. He severed ties with his family, and began writing and painting, being commissioned to produce a mural for the Rotterdam town hall. He met his partner, Jan Tijssen in 1932 and the pair lived together for the next seven years.

Struggling financially, he refused to go on welfare, producing a number of novels before his 1938 biography of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Dutch painter, Matthijs Maris, boosted his situation. His rebellious nature was evident in his founding in 1942 of the periodical *Brandarisbrief*, in which he expressed his opposition to the occupying Nazi forces. Willem had joined the Dutch Resistance movement shortly after the occupation in 1940; the unit with which he served created false identity papers for Jews. Such forgery was made more hazardous by the fact that the Municipal Office for Population Registration in the city center served as the repository of residents' personal data and so forged cards could easily be detected. The existence of this bureau therefore posed a serious obstacle to rescuing Jews and consequently a plan was devised to attack the registration office, burn all the identity cards and files kept there, and destroy the building.

The attack was carried out on the night of March 27, 1943, with Arondeus and others disguised as Dutch police officers. In blowing up the building, Arondeus's group destroyed 800 000 identity cards and 600 blank cards. The German occupation government announced a 10 000 guilder reward for information leading to arrest, and the group was betrayed 5 days after the successful raid. Willem Arondeus refused to utter a word while being interrogated. He was sentenced to death and executed on July 1, 1943.

His last words were "Let it be known that homosexuals are not cowards".

In 1984, the Dutch Government posthumously awarded each member of the group the Resistance Memorial Cross.

On June 19, 1986, Yad Vashem recognised Willem Johannes Cornelis Arondeus as Righteous Among the Nations.

Sources:

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum     [www.ushmm.org](http://www.ushmm.org)

Yad Vashem     <http://db.yadvashem.org>

[Return to top](#)

## Upcoming Events

### Parramatta Pride Picnic, 27<sup>th</sup> September



### Queer Screen Film Fest, 22<sup>nd</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> September

Event Cinemas, George Street, Sydney

“Queer Screen announces nine new films for Queer Screen Film Fest 2015, bringing the total number of sessions to twelve. We are so pleased to be closing the festival with the much anticipated [Freeheld](#) starring Ellen Page and Julianne Moore. There are several Australian Premiere screenings, an Australian Showcase presentation of a new LGBTI film by Tony Ayres, some massive star-studded Hollywood dramas and the best Queer docs from around the world. Also returning is our popular *Mixed Shorts* package led by Australian Tim Marshall's Iris Prize collaboration, *Followers*, which screened at Sundance earlier this year”.

Check out the full line-up at: <http://queerscreen.org.au/queer-screen-film-fest-2015>

[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](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:

- August 22<sup>nd</sup>
- September 26<sup>th</sup>
- October 24<sup>th</sup>
- November 28<sup>th</sup>
- December: TBA

[Return to top](#)

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Meeting held 4th Saturday of each month

**Contacts:**

**PFLAG Penrith:** Carol 02 47354680

**PFLAG Northside:** Maree. 02 8959 2830

**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

