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First Mardi Gras Inc. Newsletter

July 2020

In this July edition of the First Mardi Gras Inc. Newsletter, we have:

- Robert French updating us on **Fifty Years of Visibility**
- Info on the 10th annual **Wear it Purple Day** on **Friday 28 August 2020**
- Robyn Kennedy's report on the **Oceania InterPride** meeting
- Garrett Prestage on his **Survey: Gay and Bisexual Men's behaviour during COVID**
- My report on **78ers working with NSW Police.**

Diane Minnis

The **Annual General Meeting** of First Mardi Gras Inc. will be held on **Saturday 19 September** and will be conducted by Zoom.

Members will receive further information and a link to the the meeting next month.

Fifty Years of Visibility



Left: From the 19 September 1970 article, *Couples*, in the magazine section of *The Australian*.

Above (upper): From 6 October 1970 interview on ABC TVs *This Day Tonight* with Phyllis Papps and Francesca Curtis. Above (lower): Phyllis and Francesca pictured recently.

By Robert French

78er and Committee Member of First Mardi Gras Inc.

Member Pride History Group

On Saturday 19 September, an important milestone in Australian social history will be reached. Fifty years ago, on the 19 September 1970, an article, *Couples*, appeared in the magazine section of *The Australian*.

In the article, Janet Hawley interviewed John Ware, his partner Michael Cass and Christabel Poll. They talked about the formation of Sydney's Campaign Against Moral Persecution, or CAMP Inc., the first openly homosexual support and activist organisation in Australia.

Australia's first "coming out" in the media was Francesca Curtis's television appearance on Channel 9's Melbourne-based current affairs program, *The Bailey File*, in May 1970.

However, it was John and Christabel's appearance in *Couples* that led to the establishment of a series of CAMP groups across Australia and the impetus for a broader homosexual rights movement.

Rather than being just the anniversary of one organisation, however, the article is now viewed as the symbolic start of the gay and lesbian movement, and the beginning of 50 years of LGBTQ visibility and achievement across Australia.

The Daughters of Bilitis, now known as the Australasian Lesbian Movement (ALM), was formed in Melbourne in 1969. At first ALM was a closed lesbian support and political rights group.

On 6 October 1970, ALM's Phyllis Papps and Francesca Curtis were interviewed on ABC-TV *This Day Tonight*. This interview, and Francesca's earlier appearance on *The Bailey File*, was based on how the women came to terms with being a lesbian and the public image of lesbians.

Before this, there were really no publicly self-declared homosexuals or homosexual organisations, though there were, necessarily closeted, social groups. Within twelve months, there were CAMP groups in Melbourne, Adelaide, Brisbane, Perth, and eventually in Canberra (all in a loose federation). Campus groups, independent of CAMP, were established at Sydney University and the University of NSW; and a gay liberation subgroup that had formed within CAMP broke away in January 1972 to form Sydney Gay Liberation. And again, similar liberation groups then formed in other capitals.

We helped change perceptions within the community at large about what it means to be homosexual, and more specifically within the medical profession. We demanded equality, got anti-discrimination legislation passed and eventually we achieved homosexual law reform. We fought and overcame the scourge of HIV/AIDS and – many decades later – we gained marriage equality.

Thus, these are Fifty Years of Visibility, of gains that are worth celebrating, as are the pioneers who first helped achieve them. Here is an update on events planned so far to mark Fifty Years of Visibility.

1. The State Library Exhibition, now called *Being Seen, Being Heard: early gay and lesbian activism*: is progressing very well. The library recently gave the Advisory Committee a glimpse of some of the proposed graphics and I think they look splendid. The exhibition will run from late November 2020 until 25 April 2021.

Instead of doing a SPARK (ACON Youth Group) History Walk next year, I will book a time at the exhibition where I can talk beforehand then lead a walk around the exhibits doing background interpretation. There will be a restriction of 20 people at a time in the exhibition.

2. HomoHist 2020Conference: It is looking increasingly unlikely that this can go ahead even in February 2021. Maybe this can be held by April and before the State Library Exhibition closes.

3. Fifty Years of Visibility: I've been trying to drum up interest in the 19 September anniversary of the *Couples* article in the Australian announcing the formation of CAMP Inc. Letters/Press Releases have gone to: The Australian Magazine, The Good Weekend Magazine, David Marr at The Guardian Australia, Patrick Abboud at SBS and to the SSO. Either CAMP goes GOLD or the Pride History Group may be planning an event for the day, dependent on the COVID-19 situation. Otherwise the anniversary could be marked in another way. Maybe we could claim it as Gay and Lesbian 50 Pride Day!

4. Fifty Years of Visibility theme for Mardi Gras: I have written to the Mardi Gras CEO proposing that the theme for the Parade and Festival next year is Fifty Years of Visibility.

5. Why Did She Have To Tell The World?: This documentary tells the story of the Australasian Lesbian Movement's Phyllis Papps and Francesca Curtis, the first lesbian

couple to come out on Australian television almost fifty years ago.

ABC TV is planning to screen this film in February 2021. The Executive Producer is Sue Maslin and Abbie Pobjoy is the Director. The film has support from the ABC, The Post Lounge, Film Art Media and The Weir Anderson Foundation. But they need some help to raise an additional \$6,000 to enable them to finish this film in a strong way.

Film teaser: <https://vimeo.com/394095815>

Fundraising Campaign: <https://documentaryaustralia.com.au/project/why-did-she-have-to-tell-the-world/>.



Wear it Purple Day – Friday 28 August 2020

Wear it Purple was founded in 2010 after several rainbow young people took their own lives following bullying, harassment and lack of acceptance of their sexuality or gender identity.

Since 2010, Wear it Purple has developed into an international movement. New generations of rainbow young people continue to be dedicated to promoting this annual

expression of support and acceptance.

Everybody has the right to be proud of who we are. So join us this year, on August 30th to celebrate Wear it Purple Day. Be part of a movement that has the potential to save thousands of lives. Be part of this change.

<https://www.wearitpurple.org/>



By Robyn Kennedy

78er and First Mardi Gras Inc. Member

InterPride Interim Region 20 representative

Co-Chair InterPride Human Rights and Diversity Committee

Co-Chair InterPride Strategic Planning Committee

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Thank you to the Pride organisations in Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific that joined InterPride last year to support Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras' bid to host WorldPride 2023. Your support was invaluable in bringing WorldPride to the Southern Hemisphere for the first time.

InterPride is the world's largest association of Pride organisations with 550 members from

86 countries. InterPride, in association with the European Pride Organisers Association, was responsible for producing Global Pride 2020, held on 27th June 2020. Global Pride attracted over 1500 content submissions from Pride organisations around the world and was viewed by over 57 million people from 86 countries.

To build on the momentum created by Global Pride, I organised an interactive webinar on 22 July to bring together InterPride member organisations from Oceania – InterPride Region 20. The meeting was attended by 22 participants from 18 Pride organisations across Australia and New Zealand.

Current InterPride members from Oceania include Prides from Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Guam, Kiribati, New Caledonia, Samoa, Tahiti, Tonga and Tuvalu.

Our region currently has one acting representative (myself) but a formal appointment process will be undertaken to ensure our region has a recognised voice in InterPride. All regions are entitled to two representatives (or three if the number of regional members exceeds 50). Oceania is currently entitled to two representatives.

We are also reaching out to Pacific Island Prides to encourage them to be active in Oceania InterPride and to ensure that we effectively represent all Prides in our Region.

Global Pride grants

Applications for grants utilising donations to Global Pride are now open. Grants are available to:

- Pride organisations that are in financial distress due to COVID-19 - grants up to \$US1,000
- Organisations/groups/Pride organisations to support projects that empower LGBTQI+ communities or Pride events in underserved communities or regions - grants up to \$US1,000
- Pride organisations with specific work that promotes change to end generations of inequities, racism, injustice, and systemic oppression - grants up to \$US10,000.

There are three rolling application deadlines: August 15th 2020, September 15th 2020, and October 15th 2020. More information is available at:

<https://www.globalpride2020.org/apply/>



Survey: Gay and Bisexual Men's behaviour during COVID

By Garrett Prestage

78er and Associate Professor

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NSW Health has provided the Kirby Institute with funds to support the reorientation of the Flux study in response to an urgent need to closely monitor changes in Australian gay and bisexual men's behaviours during the pandemic and how it might affect our capacity to understand trends in HIV and other STIs over coming months and years. The COVID-19 Diary has been filled in each week by the men in Flux for a few weeks now, and is now open for new participants.

The COVID-19 Diary is a weekly 5-minute diary monitoring changes in gay men's behaviours during the pandemic. The study will:

- Measure the extent of and identify factors for the impact of COVID-19 on sexual, drug using, and health-seeking behaviours and social connectedness among gay and bisexual men.
- Assess the impact of COVID-19 on trends in HIV and other STIs among gay and bisexual men.

- Address issues such as isolation, support, mental health and resilience, income loss, and access to health services.

For every weekly diary completed, participants will go into a raffle for that week's prizes.

We need your help to promote and recruit for the study, across all jurisdictions (not just NSW). Could you assist to ensure that eligible gay and bisexual men in Australia are informed about the study.

- Link to website: <https://www.hepp.org.au>
- Link to Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/HEPPResearch>
- Link to join directly: <https://redcap.med.unsw.edu.au/surveys/?s=XXM34TPLDP>

You can help us by promoting the COVID-19 Diary through social media. To assist with recruitment, below are some text suggestions to accompany social media posts:

1. Can successes in HIV survive after COVID-19? Are gay and bi men at risk again? Join now to help our community response to COVID-19 and HIV.
2. Help our community response to COVID-19 and HIV. We need gay and bisexual men to tell us how COVID-19 has impacted their lives. Join now and help our response to COVID-19.
3. Kirby Institute UNSW needs your help! We need gay and bisexual men to tell us how COVID-19 has impacted their lives. Join now and help our response to COVID-19.

For further information about the COVID-19 Diary, please feel free to contact us at heppadmin@kirby.unsw.edu.au or mhammoud@kirby.unsw.edu.au.

Your assistance will be much appreciated.



78ers working with NSW Police

By Diane Minnis

78er and Secretary of First Mardi Gras Inc.

At the Police apology to 78ers in August 2018, Sue Fletcher suggested that the police and our community could work together to implement a safe schools type program.

Commissioner Fuller took up Sue's challenge to improve LGBTIQ education in schools. A small group of 78ers – Sue Fletcher, Peter Murphy, Wanda Kluge and myself – have worked with Police for 18 months or so. We have had some input to Anti-Bullying sessions delivered in schools by Police Youth Officers and helped develop a short film.

Now entitled *Standing Together*, the film includes interviews with 78ers about Police actions in 1978. Police officers are interviewed about the apology and tackling homophobia in NSWPF and LGBTIQ youth support organisations, including 2010 and Wear it Purple, speak about their work with young people.

Standing Together will be used in school sessions delivered by Police Youth Officers, in the training of Gay and Lesbian Liaison Officers and shown to all new Police recruits.

NSW Police aim to launch *Standing Together* on Wear it Purple day, Friday 28 August 2020, in a selection of schools. The Police HR Command is organising an internal event to launch the film and stream it across NSWPF. The City of Sydney and Police are planning a community focussed event to screen *Standing Together* and host a Q&A Panel afterwards, COVID rules permitting.

Above left: Sue Fletcher and right: Ken Davis with interviewer Izzy Calero in 'Standing Together'

Police LGBTIQ Stakeholder Forum

Last August long-standing Corporate Sponsor LGBTI, Assistant Commissioner Tony Crandell, moved to another role and Assistant Commissioner Gelina Talbot took over as Corporate Sponsor LGBTI.

78ers working on the schools programs have now been included in meetings of the Central Metropolitan Region LGBTIQ Stakeholder Forum. At the July meeting, issues of Police actions towards trans people were raised.


Following our Joint Statement on the Black Lives Matter demo, we along with First Nations Rainbow reps, requested a meeting with Assistant Commissioner Talbot to raise issue regarding Police actions at the protest. DM



Left: Assistant Commissioner Gelina Talbot, NSWPF Corporate Sponsor LGBTI. Right: Assistant Commissioner Talbot and her Professional Standards Command team – Wear it Purple 2019.

Positive ageing

A comprehensive guide brought to you by Garvan.

 Garvan Institute of Medical Research

Positive ageing

With age, the risk factor for many diseases such as Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, osteoporosis and some cancers increase.

It is possible to take active steps now to ensure, as much as possible, that you can maintain your physical and emotional health and wellbeing.

You can request a copy of the Garvan Institute's *Positive ageing* guide at: <https://www.garvan.org.au/research/guides/positive-ageing>



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