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Albany Pride Inaugural Newsletter

You spoke, we listened! Welcome to the Albany Pride inaugural monthly newsletter.

This newsletter will keep our members and community up-to-date with what your committee is working on and working towards. We will share events, news, information and some Monthly Musings.

Let's begin the wonderful journey that is the Albany Pride monthly newsletter!

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PRESIDENTS REPORT: JUNE 2022

Thanks so much everyone for getting through to the other side of all the busyness we have faced already this year - Pride Festival, the debrief, celebration, our first Albany Queer Film Festival and the strategic planning session - it's been a very busy year so far!

We have also welcomed two new committee members: **Trish Ryans Taylor** as Secretary and **Hannah Hall** as Volunteer Coordinator. Welcome aboard and thanks so much for stepping in!

Our strategic planning session was held at the library on 1st May. The group came up with drafts of the following, which we are seeking community feedback on. Please send through any thoughts by 30 June to secretary@albanypride.com.au

Mission Statement:

"Albany Pride aims to promote the health and wellbeing of LGBTQIA+ people in Albany and surrounds, providing a safe place that values and celebrates our identity."

Vision Statement:

"To create a uniquely inclusive community in Albany and surrounds, based on mutual respect and lifelong support. Our LGBTQIA+ community will be valued and respected and feel safe to be their true selves."

Our Albany Pride Groups



TransVerse: a social group for people who are trans and/or gender diverse



Spectrum: a social group for LGBTQIA+ people aged 12 - 25



Social Support Group: offers a supportive and welcoming environment for LGBTQIA+ people (and their friends and family) who may find other social events challenging.



PFLAG: a group for parents, friends, and family of LGBTQIA+ people



GRAI Book Club: if you identify as LGBTQIA+ or an ally and love books (especially those with Queer themes or authors) then this is the place for you.

Upcoming Committee Meetings

- Strategy Follow Up
Saturday 1st October
- Annual General Meeting
Sunday 2nd October

Albany Pride Membership

Come and Join Your Albany Pride!

By becoming a member of Albany Pride, you help support us to achieve our goal to make Albany a more accepting and inclusive place for our LGBTQIA+ community, and as a member you will be an integral part of our organisation and help us to achieve our mission and charitable objectives.

- ♥ Show support & contribute to your inclusive community
 - ♥ Have a voice in Albany Pride
 - ♥ Invitations to members events
 - ♥ Pre-release tickets
 - ♥ Fabulous Pride bumper sticker
- albanypride.com.au/membership/

Introducing our fabulous committee:

Albany Pride Committee of Management (COM)

President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, 2 x general committee members

Oversees all aspects of Albany Pride and Albany Pride festival and has final say in all things.

Sets the budget, policies and strategic direction of the organisation in accordance with the objectives as stated in the constitution.

Events Committee Coordinator	Pride Festival Committee Coordinator	Merchandise Committee Coordinator	Media & Marketing Committee Coordinator	Fundraising Committee Coordinator	Outreach Coordinator	Policy Coordinator	Volunteer Coordinator
Millie Reid	Vacant	Gaby Touyz	Tiger Bird	Darren Moir	Annie Arnold	Christine Kershaw	Hannah Hall
Reports directly to the COM and oversees all events throughout the year and has final say in what events we go ahead with. Ensures someone is in charge of each individual event if needed and this person reports back to them on how they are going. Develops a calendar of events for the year and liaises with marketing/media coordinator as needed.	Refer to the separate "Albany Pride Festival" flowchart. Reports directly to the COM and oversees the entire festival. PRIDE FESTIVAL COMMITTEE (inclusive of Fairday committee) Refer to the separate "Albany Pride Festival" flowchart. Volunteers needed for all aspects of the festival – see festival flowchart for details	Reports directly to the COM. Is in charge of determining what merch we need, what the budget is and organising this. MERCHANDISE SUBGROUP Volunteers will help look for interesting merch, do costings, etc	Reports directly to the COM. Oversees writing media releases; contacting media for interviews; doing interviews; organising photo shoots; Oversees all the marketing for the festival including graphic design/printing/organising flyers/posters out/contacting local business/CoA etc. SOCIAL MEDIA COORDINATOR Vacant Reports to Media and marketing coordinator. Oversees all our social media, plans annual social media strategy etc MEDIA SUBGROUP COORDINATOR Tiger Bird Volunteers must be highly competent in writing and communication/confident in talking to media/must feel confident in knowledge of Albany Pride. They might be arranging interviews and writing press releases etc. Must have good understanding MARKETING SUBGROUP COORDINATOR Karen Timmins Volunteers in this group might be doing things like designing the festival flyer, designing Facebook tiles, organising ticketing for events and managing ticketing	Reports directly to the COM. Oversees finding local & other business sponsorship, ensuring sponsors are acknowledged appropriately; ensuring Sponsors align with Albany Pride's ethos etc. Oversees donations SPONSORSHIP SUBGROUP Volunteers might be helping find sponsors, figure out what they get for their sponsorship, how they want to be acknowledged, GRANTS SUBGROUP Volunteers might be looking for grant opportunities, contacting funding bodies for ideas/advice, writing grant applications, liaising with the events team to figure out budgets etc	Reports directly to the COM. Oversees all our groups: Spectrum, Pride Support group, Transverse, GRAI bookclub and PFLAG. Ensures reporting and financial statements are completed and fed back to COM.	Reports directly to the COM. Is responsible for determining what policies AP needs and writing these policies.	Reports directly to the COM. Is responsible for recruiting, interviewing, supervising and training volunteers. Will schedule volunteers for ongoing tasks as well as staffing events, organising, and promoting events. Coordinates police checks. Form and maintain data base for volunteers on their availability and skillset. Will provide opportunities for volunteers to train as needed. Will keep volunteers informed about what's going on within AP via email or other means (newsletter)
EVENTS SUBGROUP Volunteers will be thinking of great ideas for events throughout the year, finding performers and venues, liaising with performers and venues, organising catering, finding people to be available at the events to help out							

If you're interested in filling in a vacancy please contact secretary@albanypride.com.au

Pride festival 23

- ♥ Kicked off planning at our first meeting
- ♥ Working on an event calendar
- ♥ Preliminary dates: late Feb/early March

Committee Member Spotlight

Get to know one of our committee members in each issue of the newsletter.....this month the tantalizing, twinkly and tremendous

Tiger Bird (they/them/any)

Media & Marketing Coordinator



"I've been involved with Albany Pride for nearly five years now and have found myself in charge of Albany Pride's website, graphic design and media output. It's an absolute joy to see Albany Pride grow and go from strength to strength! "

What's On

June

TransVerse
Friday 10th 4:30pm @Three Anchors
End of Month Drinks
Friday 24th 5:00pm @Due South

July

TransVerse
Friday 8th 2:40pm @Dome
Social Support Group
Tuesday 26th 5:00pm @Fellowship House
End of Month Drinks & Pool Competition
Friday 29th 5:00pm @White Star

August

TransVerse
Friday 12th 2:40pm @Dome
Social Support Group
Friday 19th 5:00pm @The Squid Shack
End of Month Drinks
Friday 26th 5:00pm @tba



Queer News Roundup

ANZ announces six weeks of gender affirmation leave for employees

After Coles announced it would be offering ten days of paid gender affirmation leave for employees, ANZ has announced it will offer six weeks of paid leave and twelve months of unpaid leave for employees to assist them in any aspect of gender affirmation processes. Coles have stated they have 900 team members across Australia that identify as transgender or gender diverse, whilst ANZ's employee resource network ANZ Pride includes more than 2000 LGBTQIA+ staff and allies across fifteen countries.

Tasmania Premier backs ban on conversion therapy

Tasmania's Premier Jeremy Rockliff has announced he will lead reforms to ban LGBT+ conversion practices. The Liberal Premier stated that he "supports[s] acting on the recommendations of the Law Reform Institute report", and that "the Attorney-General and I are working together on these matters. I will be leading the change."

Tasmanian Greens leader Cassy O'Connor has called the practices "religious whackery dressed up as therapy".

ACT drafts Australian-first legislation on deferrable surgical on intersex children

The *Variations in Sex Characteristics (Restricted Medical Treatment) Bill 2022* would prevent unnecessary interventions on intersex people without their personal consent. This would make the ACT the first state or territory in Australia to enact such laws.

Intersex people often undergo numerous surgeries as infants that seek to "normalise" their intersex characteristics. Whilst some surgeries are required in order to prevent risks to the infants in the future, others are simply cosmetic, existing solely to make children with intersex variations fit in with gender stereotypes.

Morgan Carpenter, bioethicist and executive director of Intersex Humans Rights Australia, described the bill as a "historic moment. For more than twenty years, the intersex movement in Australia has sought legal reforms to protect people with innate variations of sex characteristics in medical settings."

Australian Association of Christian Schools continue push for controversial bill

Whilst many had hoped that the election defeat of Scott Morrison may have spelt the end of the controversial Religious Discrimination Bill, it seems the Australian Association of Christian Schools (AACS) are continuing the push.

It claims that surveys it has conducted suggest the majority of Australians support the bill, however other surveys, such as one conducted by You Gov Galaxy on behalf of Just.Equal reported a majority didn't.

Mark Spencer, the Christian Schools Australia Director of Public Policy stated "Parents with children in a faith-based school clearly understand the importance of ensuring staff share the school's beliefs, with nearly 90% expressing support for protecting that right."

Whilst the bill was presented as protecting religious freedom and equality before the law, it also drew widespread criticism from Human Rights groups who said it would give the green light to faith-based schools expelling lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender students, the children of "rainbow families", and allow employment discrimination based on sexuality or gender identity. Transgender and gender-diverse children, particularly, were highlighted as being at-risk.

LGBTQIA+ children and youth are already at greater likelihood of being bullied, harassed, isolated or subjected to violence, and as such, experience far greater rates of depression, anxiety and suicidal ideation.

The bill, despite being sold as a protection against religious discrimination, also put those of minority faiths (that is, non-Christian religions) at risk of discrimination too.

Bondi 'monument of healing' honours gay hate crime victims

Hundreds of people gathered at the weekend of the 4th June in a ceremony at Bondi's memorial to gay and transgender hate crimes in Sydney.

Throughout the 1970s – 1990s, gay and transgender people were targeted in hate crimes across Sydney and New South Wales, with many of the victims being violently assaulted and killed. The New South Wales Police were seen as turning a 'blind eye' to the crimes, failing to investigate them, and even ruling some murders as suicides.

ACON CEO Nicholas Parkhill said that the ceremony "marks an important milestone in our communities' journeys towards healing and justice," and dedicated the artwork to those who have been lost, those that have survived, and to their families and loved ones.

The New South Wales government have announced a Special Commission of Inquiry, headed by a judge, to look into many of the unsolved murders.

"Questions persist about what happened during those dark times. Cases remain open... There are people still at large who must be caught, and, meanwhile, violence against LGBTQ people still continues." Said ACON President Justin Koonin.

Queensland Human Rights Commission seek to overturn harmful law

The Queensland Human Rights Commission (QHRC) is currently undertaking a review of the states Anti-Discrimination Act, particularly an exemption in the thirty-year old legislation that permits employers to discriminate "on the basis of lawful sexual activity or gender identity [if] reasonably necessary to protect the physical, psychological or emotion well-being of minors [in the workplace]".

As such, this law provides an exemption to discrimination legislation on the basis of sexuality or gender identity in schools. Sex workers can also be targeted by this exemption.

The Act also allows provisions under the "genuine occupational requirement" clause that permits religious bodies to discriminate against anybody that "openly act in a way that the person knows or ought reasonably to know is contrary to the employer's religious beliefs".

Such exemptions and clauses mean that lesbian, gay and bisexual teachers may need to remain closeted at work, and that trans and gender diverse teachers are unable to affirm their gender identity at schools.

Monkeypox Outbreak Continues

The current monkeypox outbreak, the largest seen outside of Africa, has been recorded in Australia, first reported on 20th May, 2022.

Although anyone can be infected by monkeypox, it appears – based on currently available information – that cases have been mainly identified around men who have sex with men (MSM). Typically, the virus does not spread easily between people, but usually is spread via coughs and sneezes, touching clothing, bedding or towels used by somebody with the monkeypox rash, or directly touching monkeypox blisters or scabs. The World Health Organization has warned that the virus appears to be sexually transmitted, causing global outbreaks.

Early symptoms can include fever, headache, muscle aches, backache, swollen lymph nodes, chills and exhaustion.

Once again, gay and bisexual men (and other MSM) are at risk of unfair stigma from the monkeypox outbreak, and it raises concerns in many countries that it may be used to give the 'green light' to discriminate against LGBTQIA+ people. *PinkNews* has reported that two gay men in Kabul have said the Taliban are currently using the monkeypox outbreak to detain and harass LGBTQ+ Afghans.



Monthly Musings

LGBTQ Domestic Violence Awareness Day

28th May marked LGBTQ Domestic Violence Awareness Day, an annual observance that raises global awareness about the prevalence and challenges of domestic, family and intimate partner violence and abuse in LGBTQ communities.

It's important: although awareness and discussions surrounding domestic, family and intimate partner violence and abuse in society has increased significantly, these tend to focus exclusively on cisgender, heterosexual relationships, and stories from survivors in Queer relationships are often forgotten about.

Of course, there's no disputing the prevalence of gendered violence and abuse in society, nor the need to continue to raise awareness and tackle it. But violence, control and abuse in Queer relationships and 'rainbow families' is also as prevalent, being described by the AIDS Council of New South Wales as a 'silent epidemic'.

Albany Pride was recently contacted by Sergeant Damien Smith, the Great Southern Family Violence Coordinator of WA Police, asking if there was any support required by the LGBTQ community from them, and offering any other needed support for our local LGBTQ community. The Family Violence Division of WA Police had recently been contacted by the LGBTQ Domestic Violence Awareness Foundation ahead of the Awareness Day to assist in increasing awareness and providing necessary support when it came to LGBTQ Domestic Violence.

A 2006 health and wellbeing survey of LGBTQ people conducted by the Australian Research Centre for Health and Sexuality (ARCHS) found that:

- 28% of male-identifying respondents reported having been in a relationship where a partner was abusive;
- 41% of female-identifying respondents reported having been in a relationship where a partner was abusive;

A smaller study in 2008 conducted by ARCHS found that just **under a third** of respondents had been involved in a same-sex relationship where they were abused by a partner:

- 78% of the abuse was psychological, and 58% involved physical abuse;
 - 41% of lesbian women reported having been in an abusive relationship;
 - 28% of gay men reported having been in an abusive relationship;
 - 26% of respondents had experienced sexual assault within a relationship. Violence and stalking by an intimate partner:
- 43.8% for lesbians, 61.1% for bisexual women, and 35% for heterosexual women;
 - 6% for gay men, 37.3% for bisexual men, and 29% for heterosexual men.

A 2015 US Transgender Survey reported that:

- 54% of transgender people had experienced some form of intimate partner violence, including acts involving coercive control and physical harm.

These tally with some of the results found by the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Study conducted in the United States in 2010, which also found that the lifetime prevalence of rape, physical

It goes without saying, of course, that Albany Pride completely endorses and welcomes the work of the LGBTQ Domestic Violence Awareness Foundation in tackling this very important issue and in WA Police being actively involved in approaching the subject with the urgency it requires, and we thank Sergeant Smith for reaching out to us.

If you are experiencing abuse, or suspect that somebody else is, it is important that you report it.

The Great Southern Family Violence Team can be reached by contacting (08) 9892 9300.

¹(As always, if it is an emergency, or your life or the life of somebody else is in danger, call 000).

Survivors of abuse and control in heterosexual relationships already face significant obstacles when it comes to escaping such relationships, accessing support services and rebuilding their lives. But such obstacles are magnified and made more complicated for survivors of abuse and violence in LGBTQ relationships. Unfortunately, support services are often tailored to heterosexual survivors of gendered violence and abuse, and whilst all forms of domestic violence, control and abuse have much in common, there is much that is unique to LGBTQ relationships.

For example, abusers may go to great lengths to isolate their partners from their friends and family, but LGBTQ people are already more likely to have experienced ostracization and rejection from their friends and family due to their sexuality or gender identity. A particularly unique form of control within Queer relationships is that an abuser may use the threat of 'outing' the other to their family, friends and co-workers as a form of control. Victims of such abuse and control may start to associate their sexuality or gender identity with the abuse, fuelling any internalised homo/bi/transphobia they may feel, and that their sexuality or gender identity is to blame for the abuse happening.

Because much of the information and study surrounding domestic violence and abuse is primarily focused on opposite-sex, heterosexual relationships, there are many misconceptions about domestic violence in LGBTQ relationships: for example, that the 'masculine' presenting partner is more likely to be the abuser, or that abuse and control within same-sex relationships is less 'severe' or even non-existent because the balance of power (physical, financial or emotional) between two women or two men in a relationship is perceived to be equal. Such misconceptions and gender stereotypes have a severe impact on the reporting of abuse by survivors, and in the dealing of such abuse by legal authorities (for example, dismissing acts of abuse as 'fights' or 'arguments'). Such misconceptions and the portrayal of domestic violence as a predominantly heterosexual, gendered issue also means that victims of control and abuse may not even recognise that they are being subjected to abuse in the first place.

Collectively, the LGBTQ Domestic Violence Awareness Foundation reports that more than 50% of LGBTQ people will experience domestic, family or intimate partner violence and abuse in their lifetime, but are less likely to identify domestic violence in their relationships, less likely to report it to the police or seek support from services, and are far less likely to find support services that meet their specific needs.

Despite these alarming statistics, there is still a culture of silence surrounding domestic violence and intimate partner control in the LGBTQ community. Part of this can be attributed to members of the LGBTQ community not wanting to stigmatise Queer relationships any further by giving them a 'bad name', and fear it being weaponised by those who want to discriminate against or restrict the rights of LGBTQ people. We have already seen this weaponization when it comes to heterosexual male survivors of domestic violence, who are only acknowledged as a "what about?" in order to disparage or denigrate the discussion surrounding male-on-female violence and assault (which, in turn, leads to an increased resistance to acknowledging both female abusers and male victims). Members of the LGBTQ community, like the general community, may also unconsciously maintain the misconceptions surrounding what abuse and control is, and what it looks like in non-Queer relationships.

Unfortunately, this has severe consequences for LGBTQ survivors, and presents more obstacles in them being able to seek help, to speak out, and to have their stories and experiences taken as seriously as their heterosexual, female counterparts. They may also run the risk of being alienated within LGBTQ spaces and communities for speaking out – something that is particularly problematic given that LGBTQ people already face an increased risk of isolation and ostracization by family and friends.

The relationships, health and safety of LGBTQ people matter, and as such, it is incredibly important that we acknowledge the existence of violence and control in LGBTQ relationships and 'rainbow families' – put simply, this is a pressing LGBTQ rights issue. It is also one that Albany Pride has committed to being vocal about, in order to break the silence surrounding the issue.

It is also worth taking the time to consider your own relationships. *Say It Loud* has an online resource called 'Are You In a Healthy Relationship?' that can help you identify unhealthy relationships (both intimate and familial) and comprehensive information surrounding healthy relationships: <https://sayitoutloud.org.au/healthy-relationships/quiz/?state=all>

Anonymous phone and online services:

- 1800 RESPECT (24 hours): 1800 737 723 or <https://www.1800respect.org.au/>
- Men's Referral Service (24 hours): 1300 766 491 or <https://www.ntv.org.au/>
- QLife (3pm to Midnight): 1800 184 527 or <https://qlife.org.au/>
- BeyondBlue (24 hours): 1300 22 46 36 or <https://online.beyondblue.org.au/>

Important information:

- <https://www.dvafoundation.org> – Website of the LGBTQ Domestic Violence Foundation
- <https://sayitoutloud.org.au/?state=WA> – *Say It Loud*, a website promoting healthy LGBTQ+ communities to have healthy relationships and seek support for unhealthy ones.

As always, in an emergency ring 000.

