

Rainbow News

Summer Edition - November/December/January

WORLD AIDS DAY 2009

by Ian Macdonald

Tuesday 1 December 2009 is World AIDS Day. The Red Ribbon is the international symbol of HIV/AIDS awareness and is the original ribbon used to promote awareness and support of a worthy cause. World AIDS Day is about increasing awareness, fighting prejudice and improving education. World AIDS Day is important in reminding people that HIV has not gone away and that there are many things still to be done. It is also an opportunity to

raise money for vital prevention efforts and services for people living with HIV. There are many ways you can get involved and make a tangible difference to people living with HIV/AIDS.



AIDS Awareness

Week commences on Monday 24 November and usually concludes on December 1 with a candlelight vigil. This year we are extending our activities until Saturday 5 December to include both our major fundraising activity Big Bingay on Thursday 3 December and Treatments by the Sea on Saturday 5 December.

On Tuesday 1 December 2009 you will see the ACON team, our volunteers and associated supporting organisations actively fundraising around the Lismore CBD and other locations. ACON will be working with SHAIDS in a number of areas across the northern region.

We will be in and around the CBD of Lismore on the day working from "The Barrow" on the corner of Carrington and Magellan Streets. Please stop off and say hello and buy a red ribbon. We'd love to see you from about 10am onwards.

If your business or organisation would like to assist in the raising of funds then please give us a call at ACON so that we can arrange for Red Ribbons to be delivered to you along with a collection tin for donations. A candlelight memorial gathering celebrating the lives of family and friends lost to HIV/AIDS will be held on Tuesday 1 December. You are invited to attend - please telephone ACON on 6622 1555 for more information and if transport assistance if required.

Please check page 17 for details of all ACON events



USEFUL WEB PAGES

www.acon.org.au

Information about ACON and programs

www.positivelife.org.au

View Talkabout magazine online

www.treatmentsupdate.info

Up to date information on HIV treatments and testing

www.afao.org.au

Information about AFAO, including *HIV Australia*

www.hepatitisc.org.au

Comprehensive information about Hepatitis C

www.napwa.org.au

National Association of People Living with HIV/AIDS

www.ozimen.com

Local gay website with info and profiles

www.tropicalfruits.org.au

Local gay and lesbian social group

www.ozfaeries.com

Australian Radical Faeries - North Coast

www.hivandhepatitis.com

Info and articles on HIV, HCV and co-infection

www.thebody.com/index.html

The Body - very useful and friendly US site

www.aidsmap.com

AIDSMap (UK) [(includes regular newsletter HATIP HIV and AIDS Treatment in Practice and HIV Weekly

www.aidsmeds.com

AIDSmeds.com and Poz.com - useful US sites specifically for poz community

www.medscape.com/hiv

Medscape HIV/AIDS (free registration required: lots of current clinical information)

www.projectinform.org/

Project Inform
(includes regular e-newsletter PI Perspective)

RAINBOW NEWS

is a quarterly publication of
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Disclaimer:

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily the opinions of ACON, its associates, or the Editor. Publication of contributions will be at the discretion of the Editor. Any articles containing racist, sexist, homophobic or defamatory remarks will not be published.

Contributions:

Original contributions and letters are welcomed and encouraged.

It is preferred that articles are submitted by email to imacdonald@acon.org.au in MS Word.

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Deadline for the Autumn Edition

February/March/April

Thursday 7 January 2010

This is the Summer Edition -

November/December/January

The World AIDS Day Edition

Ian Macdonald Content Editor

Sioux Harrison - layout

Stacy Hughes (in a town like Alice) proofing

Thank you to all our dedicated volunteers who pack/distribute Rainbow News.

Contributors to this issue include:

Dermot Ryan, Ian Macdonald,

Neil McKellar-Stewart and Sioux Harrison

ACON's Mission Statement

Our mission is to improve the health and wellbeing of the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender community and people with HIV, and reduce HIV transmission.

From the Manager's Desk

.....Dermot Ryan

Well it's that time of year again, it's almost summer and there's so much on. This issue of Rainbow News covers both World AIDS Day and events and activities over summer. Remember, regardless of whether it's the summer of love or just some hot times slip, slops and slap, and put some sunscreen on as well.

This year as a part of World AIDS Day ACON Northern Rivers will be at the Barrow in Magellan St Lismore, selling Red Ribbons, raising funds and of course raising community awareness of issues associated with HIV/AIDS. ACON are always on the lookout for volunteers to help with events and selling ribbons, so if you are in a position to assist us please contact ACON on 6622 1555. The theme for this year is *HIV IS STILL HERE*. Please see page 17 for the list of this years activities .

Over the new year and summer period our Education and Community Development team will be on hand at events in the region to provide roving and safe sex equipment and information. As always, the Tropical Fruits New Years events are a great time to promote our feature safe sex campaign. This year we will be releasing ***Slip It On***. In addition to blanketing *The Elements* New Years Eve Party at the showgrounds, we will have staff and volunteers out and about on Kings Beach during peak summer times, handing out campaign paraphernalia.

There have been a few changes in senior management at ACON. After 9 years as CEO Stevie Clayton has moved on. ACON's new CEO is Nicolas Parkhill. Nicolas has been with ACON for 3 years as the Director of Community Health and previous to that as Director of Operations. There will be an opportunity for people to meet Nicolas when he visits the branch early next year. ACON's Regional Services also has a new manager, Shannon Wright. Shannon is based in the Hunter and has been managing ACON's Southern region for the past two years.

Finally as many of you will know ACON has been supporting Southern Cross University, with it's research project into GLBT people's knowledge of, and attitudes towards end-of-life care. Northern Rivers Branch manager Tania Lienert is on secondment to SCU to do this research. A survey is enclosed with this copy of Rainbow News; sent to individual subscribers only. If you belong to a group or agency and would like a copy of the survey, please contact ACON. We will also have them at Reception at ACON 27 Uralba St Lismore. For more information see the letter attached to the survey. I really encourage you to fill out the survey as the results will be used to inform resources on this topic and better end-of-life care for all GLBT people.

I look forward to seeing all of you at events over the next few months. Please feel free to stop and speak to me or to call into the office in Lismore and say hi.

Dermot Ryan



Stigma is a slippery concept: a bit like beauty it is, in part, in the eye of the beholder. But when it pierces you, especially somebody living with a chronic medical condition like HIV, it disfigures and harms.

Fortunately in Australia, in 2009, many of the myths about HIV have long been dispelled for most people. Most well informed people in the general community are aware that HIV is not contagious in social and familiar contexts. The hoary old myths that it can be transmitted by insect bites, from toilet seats and through kissing or sneezing have long been put to rest. That being said, occasionally people will expose their ignorance and prejudice.

Stigma is usually involves any or all of the following:

- (1) Labelling: People are distinguished and labelled based on their HIV status or risk of infection
- (2) Stereotyping: Dominant community beliefs link people with HIV to negative stereotypes (diseased, contagious, sexually promiscuous)
- (3) Separation and loss of social status: People with HIV are placed in a distinct category to accomplish a separation of 'us' from 'them', and finally
- (4) Discrimination: This can be *self-imposed* when people with HIV withdraw from activities which they believe may result in a negative result (eg: not ask for an STI test because of fear of being judged negatively by the health worker). It may be discrimination at the

individual level (eg when a gay man with HIV gets rejected sexually by a potential partner), and may be at the *community or structural/institutional* discrimination (eg: when an employer won't allow an employee an extended meal break to enable them to collect their \$100 drugs from the pharmacy, or when a family exclude from family events a family member who is living with HIV, purely on that ground).

I'm sure that many of you reading this will be able to identify with this list of the ugly components of stigma and discrimination. Stigma reduces the real person to one who is not whole, to one who is tainted, discounted, having a spoiled identity. People who are labelled in this way may internalise such unhealthy views and others are tempted to view the stigmatised person as discredited or undesirable, and treat them accordingly. It is commonly reported by people recently diagnosed with HIV, that they feel 'undesirable' or 'tainted'. these feelings are a direct result of such wider societal stigmatising.

Perhaps most disturbingly stigma, and its end result, discrimination, may occur in the GLBT community and amongst people with HIV. At the recent Australasian HIV/AIDS Conference, results of a community survey conducted in 2009 by the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University at GLBT community events in Victoria indicated that there is a continuing level of stigma

attached to people with HIV in the GLBT community. Participants who completed the survey included 630 gay/bisexual men and 658 lesbian/bisexual women. Their mean age was 37 years. 7% of the men were living with HIV. Almost 40% of the men indicated that they would be uncomfortable having a sexual relationship with someone living with HIV. Younger people were more uncomfortable. Perhaps surprisingly, similar results were found for romantic relationships. This level of discomfort was despite the fact that over half of the men had friends who were living with HIV. These findings suggest that some men with HIV will experience stigma in negotiating sexual or romantic relationships: many men with HIV have stories of discrimination in disclosing their HIV status to potential partners.

A recent article in the international journal *AIDS care* brought together the findings of 24 studies on people with HIV, conducted in North America and published between 2000 and 2007. They found that high stigma level was consistently and significantly associated with low social support, poor physical and mental health, increasing age and lower income. The stigma felt by people in these various studies was real and part of the life experience of some PWH. These findings suggest that you may feel stigmatised if you are not as well supported as you might be by networks of friends, family and community of choice, if you're unwell or if you're experiencing anxiety or depression, if you're getting on in years or if you have access to limited financial resources. This makes sense as all these things can erode personal resilience and increase vulnerability, and if stigma comes our way it can impact on health and well-being. What to do about it?

One way to reduce the impact of stigma at the individual level is to avoid people who stigmatise and discriminate on the basis of your HIV status.

Sometimes that's not possible, so developing some strategies can help: develop some scripts in your head both to challenge the stigma and to educate the stigmatising person. We have an opportunity to help dispel the myths and break down the prejudices: this requires courage and a certain hardiness, this comes with time and for some people gets easier once we get used to the idea of challenging others. Being an advocate for people with HIV can be hugely empowering! Being part of the community of people with HIV is another way of building resilience and a sense of shared experiences. Addressing issues around health and well-being can also build resilience: doing something about anxiety and depression or loneliness, will help to push away stigma when it is expressed in our life.

Please feel free to contact Neil or Roy in the Northern Rivers Office if you would like to discuss any personal issues of stigma and discrimination.

Check out HIV Australia vol. 7 no. 3 for some really good recent articles on stigma.

Further reading (copies available from Neil):

Logie C, Gadalla TM Meta-analysis of health and demographic correlates of stigma towards people living with HIV. *AIDS Care* 2009 Jun; 21(6):742-53.

Mahajan AP et al. Stigma in the HIV/AIDS epidemic: a review of the literature and recommendations for the way forward. *AIDS* 2008 Aug; 22 Suppl 2: S67-79.

Faerie Glitterball, October 31

**Celebrating 10 years
of community merriment**

It's 10 years since the faeries started making merry-o for one night each Spring at the **Jiggi Hall** in the oh so glamorous community party known as the Faerie Glitterball. **October 31** is anniversary #10 of the Faerie Glitterball.

And because it is the height of spring, this year we are celebrating **Beltane** – the old world festival of spring. We invite all queer folk and their friends to come and join us.

Bring the spirit of spring with you and come with the spirit of celebration and the spirit of community.

Come as a spring being - a randy goat, a raunchy maiden, a priestess of the blossoms, a god in heat, a faerie dressed in a flower garden or your spring desire.

**We'll open the doors at 8 o'clock
Greet spring and your fellow faeries
in a special Beltane ritual at 9.30**

A line up of great DJs

Fine food from Faerieland

Tickets \$15-\$20 at the door

BYO - 8 pm to 2 am

***If you think you've
just been at risk...***

PEP

***is a treatment that might
stop you getting HIV.***

**ACT
NOW!**

CALL THE PEP 24 HOUR HOTLINE

1800 737 669

1800 PEP NOW

NORCOWAM PLWHA

No Ordinary Rural Community of Women And Men. (NORCOWAM), is an on line group/forum open to all HIV Positive people living in the Northern Rivers area of NSW (we have members down as far as Kempsey, Coffs Harbour and Tamworth), as well as poz people living in South East Queensland. The group is supported by ACON and Positive Life NSW Inc. We provide a space for chatting, online connection, information, education, support from peers and a general what's on! Also note our hosting site gives us our own private chat room for real time interactivity with other members that cannot be viewed by external parties. We are open to all poz people regardless of gender or sexual orientation.

To become a member email: Nick Roy minyon@skymesh.com.au OR

Neil McKellar-Stewart at ACON nmckellar-stewart@acon.org.au

As this is a private closed community we need to ask you a few questions to verify your status prior to joining to maintain the integrity of this community.



BEATS

by Ian Macdonald and Dermot Ryan

Men who have sex with men (MSM) at beats should always take precautions to ensure their personal safety. Often beats are secluded and dimly lit areas pose a threat to the safety of people whether they're beat users or not. You are encouraged to always take care when visiting such areas, especially at night.

The NSW Beats Interagency, of which ACON is a member, has just launched a new website (see below) to assist people in maximising their safety at beats. The site lists information about personal safety at beats, sexual health, legal issues, environmental impact, and interactions with police. It's a valuable resource for men in our community who use beats, or who are thinking of using beats, to visit the website and ensure they understand what sort of precautions they can take against violence.

The best defence against violence is staying alert and you are advised, in the first instance, to trust your instincts. If something doesn't feel right then leave. There are other recommendations listed on the website including:

- Tell someone where you are going
- Doing a beat when drunk or on drugs may impair your judgment and make you more vulnerable
- Don't wear a personal stereo – you need to hear what's going on and it may also prompt attack for the purpose of robbery
- Wear clothes and shoes in which you can run and move freely
- Know your surroundings – you may need exits/escape routes
- If you want to leave the beat with someone you meet, talk with them first. This may help you determine whether you feel safe with them.

- Stay away from anyone you think is suspicious – even if they look like your 'type'. Be especially wary of groups of people
- If threatened, run away (if you can) and try to attract help by shouting. Or, if you see anyone being hassled, call the police or yell. Take a note of their details (appearance, car rego, etc) so that you can identify them later
- If you see someone being attacked, try to help them but don't put yourself at risk
- Consider learning self-defence
- Keep in mind that if you drive to a beat your vehicle is susceptible to vandalism, break-in and theft and recognition.

Then of course there are other "beats" where you can hook-up with other MSM. In the 21st century we have the internet which is probably the safest cruising area available. More about that in our next publication.

Further information on keeping safe at beats, safe sex at beats, interacting with police and your legal rights can be found on the NSW Beats Interagency website: www.beats.net.au

HAVE YOUR SAY

A suggestion box is located in the foyer of the Branch Office at 27 Uralba St, Lismore, where you can make suggestions and voice compliments or concerns anytime. You can leave your contact details and you will receive a reply. Anonymous suggestions will be answered here in Rainbow News. Alternatively you may just like to introduce yourself. Please contact the acting Manager Dermot Ryan on 6622 1555 Monday to Friday or email him dryan@acon.org.au A feedback form is also available on our website just go to: <http://www.acon.org.au/about-acon/feedback>

GO BANANAS FOR CONDOMS

A new campaign is aiming to make gay men go bananas for condoms by getting fashionable brands to promote safe sex.



Due to be launched during the New Years' festivities, the innovative campaign is being produced by ACON, Features pop art-inspired bananas and a tagline of "Slip It On". The campaign is breaking new ground by enlisting various fashion and lifestyle brands to promote safe sex by having the campaign's *Slip It On* logo appear in their marketing and publicity for selected products.

With its cheeky nod to the familiar red tips found on some Australian-grown bananas, ACON CEO Nicolas Parkhill says the *Slip It On* campaign is designed to extend the safe sex message from beyond gay venues and events and get it onto products that gay men use at home.

"HIV is one of the biggest health issues for gay men in Australia who account for over 70 percent of new diagnoses," Mr Parkhill says. "In NSW, the rate of HIV transmission has been relatively stable for over 10 years because most gay men in NSW use condoms most of the time. However, we always need to reinvent our safe sex messages to ensure they remain relevant, engaging and effective."

"One of the key strategies for HIV prevention is developing and maintaining a culture that supports safe sex. This is particularly important for young gay men who may not be familiar with the risks of unprotected sex or who perceive condoms as lacking a 'cool factor'. With this campaign we're trying to make condom use more appealing and get that message into gay men's homes by cross-promoting safe sex with popular and fashionable brands."

...continued on page 9

International sportswear label teamm8 is the campaign's launch partner. Designer Michael Nicolas says the campaign is a great fit for his products. "The brand essence of teamm8 is all about the sporting spirit of everyday champions," Mr Nicolas says. "Safe sex is an essential part of keeping fit and healthy so we see this as an opportunity to add value to our brand. We're very excited to be involved."

The campaign's first big outing was at Sydney's infamous Sleaze Ball with a squad of teamm8 models giving away bananas and condoms at the sports-themed event. Partygoers at the Tropical Fruits New Years Eve Party will also be able to contribute to the campaign by posing with bananas at a special Slip It On photo booth. The best poses will win teamm8 merchandise and other prizes.

After the New Years events long weekend, the campaign will continue to be promoted in GLBT media, at selected GLBT venues and community events, and via a dedicated campaign website: www.acondom.org

The campaign was created by Sydney-based agency Frost*Design. Other partners involved in the launch include condom manufacturer Glyde, events company PLAY Communications and PR agency The Capital Group.

ACON Rovers

by Sioux Harrison



Who can believe it is coming up to the end of another year. It means another year of life has gone by but it also means the Tropical Fruits New Year parties are soon to be attended.

One of the most fulfilling roles within my work is the 'coordination' of ACON Northern Rivers volunteers. During October I had the privilege of training ten new ACON Rovers.

Who and what are Rovers? They are the pink vested volunteers you see wandering around the party looking out for patrons' health and well being. If you or a friend have any trouble concerning alcohol or drug use, or if you need directions or someone to talk to please find us. Rovers are not security or medical but can contact either quickly if you

need them.

To all the other trained Rovers amongst our readership it is time to put in your preferences for this years shifts. There are 4 shifts on NYE and 2 for Recovery. And of course it is impossible for everyone to work the coveted 'first' shift. Give me a call at ACON on 6622 1555 or 1800 633 637 to reserve your shift.

To all Rovers and party goers I look forward to us working together to make this party experience memorable, safe and happy. Say hi if you come across one of our pink vested volunteers, I know they would like to say hi to you!

Tropical Fruits New Year's Festival 2009

The Elements

The Tropical Fruits New Year's Festival is now a four day queer celebration held in Lismore in sub-tropical northern NSW, an area known suitably as the Rainbow Region. The New Years Eve party and the New Years Day recovery party will be held at the retro-chic Lismore showgrounds, lovingly transformed by hundreds of volunteers into a sumptuous smorgasbord of our own unique culture.

Visitors are also invited to use the camping facilities adjacent to the showgrounds, replete with themed areas to suit all your camp needs.

Party goes on New Year's Eve can sashay between two massive, proto-industrial dance spaces - Trade and Arena, featuring top Australian and international DJs. For a more relaxed, intimate dance experience just head to The Cube groove/chill space.

Get a culture shot at the Art Show and Cabaret. Our region has the highest concentration of artists, musicians and other creative types living in rural NSW, many of them gay or lesbian, and they're showcased them for you! You can also catch some very queer viewing at the Queer Fruits Film Festival in Lismore's grand old Star Court Theatre on December 29 and 30.



At the party you will be able to relax with some scrumptious food, coffee, chai and collapse into a comfy couch at the cafe. The licensed bar is huge, but at times you still may have to queue - with a whole lot of happy, chatty, and perhaps somewhat under-clad queer folk. At midnight, on New Year's Eve, you can oh and aah aloud with all your new-found family and friends at the totally amazing, over-the-top fireworks spectacular.

Rejuvenate on New Year's Day at the sensational, slippery, sexy pool party held in the post-deco ambience of Lismore Baths, booked exclusively for Tropical Fruits. Swim, shower, sun yourself - recharge your Vitamin D and get moist dancing by the pool with some delectable queer folk, this time seriously under-clad.

Then it's back to the showgrounds, as the sun starts to set on New Year's Day, to enjoy a BBQ and a chat with the volunteers as we kick back and get set to groove the night away at Recovery. Please read the next page for all ticketing details.

TROPICAL FRUITS



Are you a member of Tropical Fruits yet?
Call 02 66226440 and "Get Fruited"



ACON encourages you to join and support 'Fruits' in 2009
....and of course for all the events in 2010

GLBTI EVENT



TROPICAL FRUITS

PRESENTS

THE ELEMENTS

NEW YEARS EVE 09

DJs

Sveta
Feisty
Mandy Rollins
Corey Czok

Neroli
Kitty Glitter
Phillip Mezzatesta
Steve Sonius
Kimo

Art Exhibition Cabaret Cafe Circus Fireworks

www.tropicalfruits.org.au

Lismore Showgrounds
8pm to 6am

Tickets on sale 1st September www.tropicalfruits.org.au
Limited Earlybird Mem \$65/ Conc \$75/ Guest \$85 All other tickets Mem \$75/ Conc \$90/ Guest \$100

Also Debuting

New Years Day Pool Party

Lismore Memorial Baths
1st Jan 2010, 10am - 4pm
DJs Beefy Boy, Lady K
Mem \$10/ Conc \$15/ Guest \$20



29th & 30th Dec
www.queerfruitsfilmfestival.org

Recovery Party

Free BBQ & Live Entertainment
1st Jan 2010 4pm - 1:30pm
Lismore Showgrounds
DJs Matt Vaughan, Stephen Allkins
Mem \$25/ Conc \$30/ Guest \$40

The HIV/AIDS Legal Centre is a community legal centre based in Sydney. Our mandate is to provide legal advice and representation in HIV-related matters; these include areas such as discrimination (including in employment), breaches of privacy, estate planning (wills, powers of attorney and/ or guardianship), superannuation and insurance, migration, social security and tenancy. We also undertake policy work and law reform in the above areas, as well as providing community education to service providers and communities affected by HIV.

Services are provided free of charge. While the majority of our work is centred in Sydney, we are in the process of extending to regional areas of New South Wales and to this end are attending at (SHAIDS/ ACON) on 23 November 2009 in order to provide casework assistance and hopefully engage with relevant service providers. Queries can be directed to Indraveer on (02) 9206 2060, or by email at: halc@halc.org.au."

Radical Faeries- 10th Annual Faerie Glitterball

October 31 - Beltane Pagan Madness

"The Coming of Spring".

Join us at the Jiggi Hall from 8-00 pm

for our annual community dance and performance evening



I'VE GOT NO SYMPTOMS. DO I HAVE AN STI?

to find out visit www.whytest.org or call the Sexual Health Hotline on 1800 009 448 for your nearest sexual health clinic

**The person most likely to pass on HIV
probably **doesn't even know** he has it**

HIV Increase Info Line 1800 009 448 www.acon.org.au

Treatments by the Sea 8

A free workshop for People with HIV

In for the long haul:

making sure your treatments keep working

In a beautiful coastal village on the far north coast

Saturday, 5 December 2009

11:00am—4:30pm

Workshop Topics to include:

STAYING ON TRACK: AN INTRODUCTION TO HIV DRUGS & RESISTANCE

Prof. Marilyn McMurchie,
Department of General Practice, University of Sydney

HELPING YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM: NUTRITION TIPS FOR PEOPLE WITH HIV

Annette Morgan,
School of Natural and Complementary Medicine, SCU

WHEN YOU'RE ON A GOOD THING: STICKING WITH TREATMENTS: HINTS & TIPS

David Youds,
Practice Nurse, Gladstone Road Medical Centre

- There will be an opportunity to ask questions of our experienced, approachable presenters
- Enjoy good food, and friendly, relaxed atmosphere in a safe environment
- Morning, Afternoon Tea and Lunch provided
- Numbers for the workshop are limited.

Please contact ACON to register. Registration by 1 December please!

T: 1800 633 637 (freecall) or (02) 6622 1555

E: nmckellar-stewart@acon.org.au

Further program and venue details will be sent to you

If you require information or assistance with transport please call ACON

Organised by ACON Northern Rivers, with unrestricted grant funding from Boehringer Ingelheim P/L



CHRISTMAS PREZZIES

Ask a Lesbian to lunch #2

SATURDAY
12th DECEMBER
From 12 noon
Feminist Book SWAP!
Just turn up on the day!

Vego LUNCH
\$5 entry
GUEST SPEAKERS
LIVE ENTERTAINMENT
All proceeds to the
Lesbian Counselling Service

CELEBRATING DIVERSITY IN OUR COMMUNITY

BIG THANKS

To all who made a contribution to the This Is Oz initiative. Over the past six months there has been sustained interest from the community in this project. pictures have been uploaded to the website confirming the diversity of ACON's community members. This Is Oz was an outcome of ACON's involvement in the International Day Against Homophobia (IDAHO) which is celebrated on May 17 each year.



WOMEN'S SOFTBALL TEAM

**For further information please
call Sheila on 6624 6734**

**Lismore and District Women's
Health Centre**

Lismore and District Women's Health Centre
25 Uralba Street Lismore, NSW 2480. Phone
02 6621 9800

Open Monday to Thursday from 9am to 5pm

www.lismorewomen.org.au

thisoz.
Speak up for an inclusive Australia.

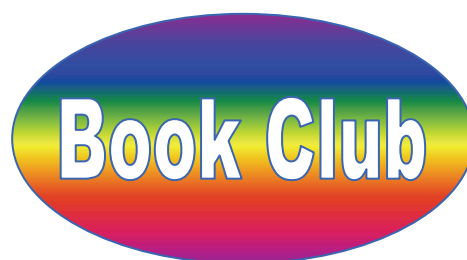
All 480+ pages of this modern Australian fiction came to us offering connectedness to the twenty-first century family. Amongst the plaudits for this work were a range of alliterations such as powerful, passionate, parenting, poignant and provocative. Pathos too?

Somewhere Mr Tsiolkas must have re-read the lives of many of us who grew up in the 50's and 60's producing offspring throughout the 70's and 80's. Sorry Christos your attempt at a commentary relaying the psycho-social conflicts of modern family life in this day and age is really old hat. We've been there and done it all before Hector, Harry and Hugo; and Hugo is a brat! Yes, Christos, there have always been brats and I imagine that well into the twenty-second century there will still be brats. Please Mr Tsiolkas if you really want to make comment on Australia in this day and age then tell us something new. Or, (as it has been said so many times in the past) is it a case of everything old is new again?

The Slap provided me with one of the fastest page-turning reading events of the twenty-first century. So many characters, and some beautifully painted in words, but not always relevant to the story. To say it again, there was nothing new in this script which led a fellow book club member to liken *The Slap* to a soap opera. This has been vindicated by the ABC deciding to turn *The Slap* into an eight

episode series. Perhaps it is soap opera?

Did I enjoy any part of this? Well as an ex-Melbournian I found the nostalgia of visiting my old home town, in print, quite enjoyable. For the rest of the psycho-social journey around middle-class Melbourne it was really a tram ride going nowhere.



Do you enjoy reading books?

Perhaps you need an incentive?

Do you enjoy discussing your reading with others?

If you answered yes to just one of these then the ACON Northern Rivers *Third Tuesday Book Discussion Club* is for you.

We meet at ACON's Lismore offices from 5.15pm every third Tuesday of the month to discuss, over drinks and snacks (supplied by all participants), a book selected by the consensus of the members for all to read that month. Sufficient copies of the books are arranged through the Richmond-Tweed Regional Library, Lismore Branch, so there is no cost involved. It would be helpful if Book Club members can join the Library (free) but this isn't essential.

If you are interested then contact

Sioux or Ian at ACON (02) 6622 1555

The next gatherings will be at ACON on Tuesdays

17 November, 15 December and 20 January 2010

ALL FICTION READERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND

ACON NORTHERN RIVERS

HIV Health Maintenance Program
ACON's HIV Health Maintenance Officer
Neil is available to discuss HIV treatments
and living healthily with HIV.

Client Services Officer:

Roy Starkey is available to discuss any issues one-to-one Monday to
Friday 10am - 4pm. Please phone for appointments

Sex Workers Outreach Program (SWOP):

Information, support and referrals available for sex workers. Lube &
condoms available at cost prices

Needle & Syringe Program:

1 ml syringes/disposal bins and some other equipment available
We offer information, referral and support

Vitamin Service: **

A range of quality vitamins and nutritional supplements are
available at reduced prices from reception.
Ring to place an order or to receive a current vitamin list

Lesbian Health Project:

Lesbian health information, referrals and support
available from Amber our Lesbian Health Project Worker

Lesbian Counselling Service:

In partnership with Lismore and District Women's Health Centre,
counseling for same sex attracted women is available Mondays

Phone: 6621 9800

**** Please note that we now have a new system for ordering**
vitamins and associated products from ACON

Orders will be received at the ACON
office up until 12 noon every Tuesday

Orders will be available for collection after 2.00pm on Friday of the week of order

World AIDS Awareness Week Activities

AIDS Awareness Week commences on Monday 24 November and we are extending our activities until Saturday 5 December



On Monday 1 December keep an eye out for Red Ribbon distributors and collectors across the region. A donation of \$2 for a ribbon will show your support for people living with HIV/AIDS. Find us in Lismore at The Barrow in Magellan Street from 10.00am



On Tuesday 1 December a Candlelight Vigil will commence at 8pm in Spinks Park adjacent to the band rotunda. All are welcome to attend this simple and dignified assembly to remember and celebrate the lives of those who have died from HIV/AIDS.



Treatments by The Sea (please see page 13) will be held on Saturday 5 December from 11.00 am. This program will provide an opportunity to meet with other People With HIV (PWH) and to participate in workshop sessions dealing with HIV and your health. This is one of ACON Northern Rivers most popular annual events. To register please telephone ACON on 6622 1555 or 1800 633 637.



On Thursday 3 December we will be holding our major fundraising activity Big Bingay at the Lismore Workers Club from 6.00pm and hosted by that sweetie **Miss Sugar Cane** ably supported by **Roland de Hey**. Why not organise a table for the night's fun?

Nov/Dec 09 Jan 10 Calendar

November

25	BGF Tweed	1800 651 011
26	BGF Lismore	1800 651 011
6 & 20	Luncheon Club	1800 633 637
2	Grafton outreach	1800 633 637
10	Tweed outreach	1800 633 637
17	ACON Book Club	1800 633 637
Th 5,12,19 & 26	Womens Roller Derby	1800 633 637

December

1	World AIDS Day	1800 633 637
1	WAD Candlelight Vigil	1800 633 637
3	Bingay	1800 633 637
4 & 18	Luncheon Club	1800 633 637
5	Treatments by the Sea	1800 633 637
7	Grafton outreach	1800 633 637
12	Ask a Lesbian to Lunch	1800 633 637
15	ACON Book Club	1800 633 637
15	Tweed Outreach	1800 633 637
28	GLAM Bowling	1800 633 637
29/30	Queer Fruits Film Festival	6622 6440
31	Tropical Fruits NYE Party	6622 6440

January

Various days in Jan	ACON Outreach Kings Beach	1800 633 637
1	Tropical Fruits Recovery	
15 & 29	Luncheon Club	1800 633 637
7	Rainbow News deadline	1800 633 637
4	Grafton outreach	1800 633 637
12	Tweed outreach	1800 633 637
20	ACON Book Club	1800 633 637

ACON Closure

ACON will close its doors 5pm Thursday 24 December
and reopen at 9am Monday 4 January 2010
ACON will be closed Australia Day Tuesday 26 January 2010



bobby goldsmith foundation
practical emotional financial support

BGF OUTREACH VISITS:

BGF will be visiting our local areas
in September and November

Nov 25: Tweed Heads

Nov 26: Lismore

All by appointment

Appointments are available with
Sue Wood & Kit Ayers

New and existing clients are welcome
To arrange an appointment, please
contact BGF directly on 1800 651 011

ACON OUTREACH VISITS

ACON Northern Rivers
Client Services Officer Roy Starkey
provides regular outreach visits to
Grafton and the Tweed regions

Grafton 1st Monday of month
at Clinic 229 Tel 02 6640 2229

November 2 December 7 January 4

Tweed Heads 2nd Tuesday of month
at Clinic 145 Tel (07) 5506 6850
November 10 December 8 January 13

Contact Roy on 6622 1555
or 1800 633 637
to make an appointment

More THANKS

The Lesbian Health Project wishes to thank everyone who attended the WHIP IT premiere film screening on International Lesbian Day Thursday 8 October 2009. Together we raised much needed funds for our Lesbian Counselling Service totalling \$700.00. Well Done!

Rumour has it that women living in the Northern Rivers are gathering to bring Roller Derby to Lismore. These women can be contacted by e-mail northernriversrollergirls@gmail.com

These women are serious and this exciting new project is snow balling!

Our Lesbian Health Project worker was seen at the Barrow on International Lesbian Day this year - giving information, promoting the project and affirming lesbian sexuality in our fabulous City of Lismore!

Particular thanks go out to Tropical Fruits, who have so generously given time and energy to the success of this event with the purchase of tickets and also volunteer support at 'The Barrow', Birch Carroll and Coyle who are thrilled by the success of the fundraiser and the Northern Rivers ACON team who supported and assisted in making WHIP IT happen! Cheers to queers and here's to many more!

COMMUNITY CONTACTS

ACON, Northern Rivers

Dermot Ryan Acting Manager dryan@acon.org.au
Amber McBride, Lesbian Health Project Worker
amcbride@acon.org.au
Ian Macdonald, Education and Community Development Officer
imacdonald@acon.org.au
Neil McKellar-Stewart, HIV Health Maintenance Officer
nmckellar-stewart@acon.org.au
Roy Starkey, Client Services Officer - rstarkey@acon.org.au
Sioux Harrison, Admin/Volunteer Officer - sioux@acon.org.au

Legal

HALC - HIV/AIDS Legal Centre NSW
Free legal advice - 1800 063 060 / 9206 2000

Northern Rivers Community Legal Centre - 6621 1000
Free legal advice, information and referral. Women's Outreach
Court Support and Legal Education.

NSW Police Gay and Lesbian Liaison Officers

Byron Bay	Sgt. Murray Powell - 6685 9499
Grafton	Snr Constable Paul Johnston 6642 0222
Lismore/Ballina	Insp Nicole Bruce 6623 1599
Tweed Heads	Snr Constable Gabby Ash 07 5536 0999

Support

Australian Bisexual Network (Northern NSW and Country Queensland) 1800 653 223 / ausbinet@optusnet.com.au

Gender Centre 7 Bent Street (P.O. Box 266) Petersham NSW 2049
Phone: (02) 9569 2366 Fax: (02) 9569 1176
GAMMA (Gay and Married Men's Association) 1800 804617

COAL (Coalition of Activist Lesbians)
Lavender: 0448 251 348

PFLAG Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays
Phone Shelley Argent
T: (07) 3017 1739 E: pflagbrisbane@hotmail.com

Lemon Sundaes Lesbian Parenting Group
6624 6446 or 6685 1990

Gay Dads NSW Dominic 0400 296 253 nsw@gaydadsaustralia.com

INTRA The Buttery's Alcohol and Other Drugs Outreach Program
PO Box 42 Bangalow 2479 02 6687 2835
<http://www.intra.org.au> <http://www.misalifestylesupport.org.au>

The Freedom Transgender Support Group
www.youngender.com e: freedom.support@hotmail.com
Meet 3rd Saturday of the month 10-00am -1-00pm Nerang

Freecall Numbers

ACON Sydney - 1800 063 060
24-hour HIV Treatment Support - 1800 454 510
AIDS Hotline - 1800 451 600
BGF - 1800 651 011 / Fax 1800 651 012
Domestic Violence Crisis Line NSW - 1800 656 463
Hep C Info & Support - 1800 803 990
Positive Life (NSW) - 1800 245 677
Lifeline - 24 hour counselling - 13 11 14

Services

Sexual Health Clinics
SHAIDS - Sexual Health & AIDS Service - 6620 2980
Clinic 145, Tweed Heads - 07 5506 6850
Grafton - Phone 6640 2229
Lismore, Byron and Ballina - 6620 2980

North Coast Areas Health Service Liver Clinic - for HepC clients
02 6620 7539

**Lismore and District Women's Health Centre including
ACON's Lesbian Counselling Service**
25 Uralba Street - 6621 9800

Women's Health Matters
Menopause, Osteoporosis and Incontinence
Phone 6620 2999

Mensline - Ph 6622 6116 / www.menandfamily.org.au

Gay and Lesbian Counselling Services
1800 184 527 (5.30-10.30pm, 7 days)

GayLine (Brisbane) - 1800 249 377

Dental (People living with HIV/AIDS)
North Coast Area Health Service - 6620 2617

Public Dental Health
Call for locations of other public dental clinics or to make
appointments for the Lismore area - 1300 651 625

Tweed Shire Women's Services
PO Box 407, Murwillumbah 2484

Social

Sista-Link (Tweed Region Lesbian Network)
Host regular women's coffee group at Murwillumbah 6672 2868
Tweed Ph 0439 744 322
sista_link@hotmail.com

Feathers Women's Social Club
Monthly dances for women—members \$7 non members \$10
Website: www.feathersgc.com email contact: info@feathersgc.com

BLSG (Ballina Lesbian Social Group)
email blsg2005@hotmail.com or contact Helen 0407 226 967

Tropical Fruits Social and support for the GLBT community and
friends their ph/fax 6622 6440 Website www.tropicalfruits.org.au

Radical Faeries 130 acre land sanctuary, north of Nimbin. Come
and visit, gatherings, rituals, communal workdays. Call us first
6689 7070.
Email ozfaeries@yahoo.com / Website www.ozfaeries.com

Blues Sisters Softball Team lesbian-bi-queer and queer-
friendly. Contact Sheila 6624 6734.

Lemon Sundaes Lesbian Parenting Group
Contact Michelle: 0414486185