



1985

1995

10 YEARS ON



ANNUAL REPORT 1994-1995

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• ACON'S MISSION •

ACON's purpose is to bring the AIDS crisis to an end. We strive to do this by:

- building on the response of the gay community;
- empowering all affected by the epidemic;
- and achieving self-determination for people with HIV/AIDS

We work primarily with gay men, and we are committed also to working with other people and communities directly affected by the epidemic in New South Wales.

Core values

Social Justice

Paramount to the work of ACON is the belief in the rights of social justice for all people including those living with HIV/AIDS. ACON believes that health is a fundamental human right and that people affected by HIV/AIDS have the right and the duty to participate, both as individuals and collectively, in the planning and delivery of their health care.

The HIV/AIDS epidemic is special

ACON believes that the HIV/AIDS epidemic is - and will remain - special.

This arises from a unique confluence of factors, namely:

- transmission of the virus involves sex, drugs and blood - issues society is only slowly learning to deal with openly and calmly
- the societal groups most at risk - gay men, injecting drug users and sex workers are traditionally wary of government and the health system, and subject to prejudice by both social institutions & by individuals
- the paradoxical nature of the virus - that it is communicable and the person infected always remains infectious, yet transmission is easily preventable as long as the confidence and the cooperation of those infected and most at risk is retained.

This means that the epidemic requires innovative, challenging, sometimes audacious responses from government, and from the health system.

Community Mobilisation

ACON originated in the gay community in Sydney, and is in itself the primary expression of the community's response to the epidemic.

ACON values its origins and seeks to promote and implement community development strategies which initiate, nurture encourage and facilitate community mobilisation, believing these to be the only effective responses to the epidemic in the long run.

Major areas of work

In order to achieve our Mission ACON initiates, conducts & supports a range of activities in four major areas: advocacy and policy, education, HIV support and care, and human and physical resources. Experience has taught us that, rather than four discrete areas of work, these are areas intimately linked. An effective response to the epidemic requires as much a focus on this interlinking as on work in a particular area.

Advocacy and policy

ACON has a key responsibility in developing and advocating effective HIV/AIDS policy. We work in all areas of HIV/AIDS policy including policy issues and advocacy with government, the health system, the community sector and workplaces. We provide advocacy on behalf of individuals living with HIV/AIDS on a wide range of issues.

Education

We conduct a wide range of education programs, focusing chiefly on people living with HIV and gay and bisexual men. These are aimed at improving health maintenance among people living with HIV and at promoting safe sex and safe needle use. A diverse range of strategies and techniques is used, including community mobilisation, outreach, peer education approaches, social marketing and information provision.

HIV support and care

ACON uses a range of strategies to promote empowerment of people with HIV/AIDS. This includes community mobilisation and group support strategies as well as the provision of a range of services promoting independence and improved quality of life for people living with HIV/AIDS. Counseling, peer support, treatment information, home care, housing assistance, legal advice, transport, vitamin and food supplement provision and services referral are major elements in the range of services offered.

Human and physical resources

We work to develop and improve skills of both volunteers and employees in their contribution to achieving our Mission. This includes developing and maintaining an efficient and effective organisation which fosters and promotes the participation and work of people from affected communities.

Background

The AIDS Council of New South Wales (ACON), is a community-based organisation funded by the NSW and Commonwealth Government and is Australia's largest AIDS organisation.

Formation and membership

ACON was formed in 1985 at a public meeting organised by members of Sydney's gay community to discuss appropriate ways of responding to HIV/AIDS in NSW. The meeting subsequently resolved to form the AIDS Council, adopt a constitution and elect a Committee to manage the affairs of the Council.

ACON represents and provides services for all people affected by AIDS in NSW.

ACON has branches based in the Hunter (Newcastle), the Mid-North Coast (Coffs Harbour), the Northern Rivers region (Lismore) and Illawarra (Wollongong). In addition, a Western Sydney office of ACON operates in Parramatta.

A number of community organisations are closely affiliated with ACON, including the Community Support Network (CSN), which provides volunteer home care and support for people with AIDS, and the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation, a charitable organisation which provides financial assistance to people with AIDS.

Management

ACON is incorporated under the NSW Associations Incorporation Act and has a detailed constitution and a management plan to ensure efficient use of resources, clear lines of communication and effective participation of volunteers.

ACON is governed by an elected honorary committee of 12 persons, which determines ACON's strategic directions, policy and accepts financial accountability.

Committee of Council has a number of working groups and sub-committees to advise it and to develop policy. Membership of working groups and sub-committees is open to anyone willing to contribute.

The staff of ACON carry out day-to-day administration and implement policy to meet the Mission and Strategic Plan established by the organisation.

Staff also manage the operation of CSN, with the Executive Director of ACON also acting as the Executive Director of CSN.

Staff

ACON has over 75 full-time staff and a number of other staff employed for fixed term projects.

Staff in the Sydney office are grouped into management units - HIV Strategy and Support Unit; Care, Housing and Transport Unit; Client Service and Information Unit; Policy and Women's Unit; Sydney Gay Education Unit; Peer Education Unit; and Organisational Services Unit. The staff are responsible through Unit Managers to the Executive Director and Deputy Director, who are in turn responsible to the Committee of Council for all aspects of the organisation's operation.

Volunteer participation

ACON and its affiliated organisations rely a great deal on the involvement of volunteers. We actively encourage the involvement of our membership and the community in our activities, particularly in home care and participation in working groups.

Conclusion

ACON's philosophy is to work closely with the State and Commonwealth Governments and with other organisations in the HIV/AIDS area. The Council and its affiliated organisations provide a very effective model of optimising community involvement in responding to AIDS in NSW.

• In Memoriam •

The Committee, Staff, Volunteers and Management of ACON wish to dedicate this Annual report and the work it represents to the memory of those AIDS Council Staff, Volunteers and Committee members who have lost their lives as a result of AIDS over the course of the last 12 months.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

1994-95 has been a year of change and consolidation for ACON. Political, strategic and physical developments kept the organisation busy and were at times unsettling. However, the overall outcomes and achievements of the year have been positive and are encouraging for the future.

It was the 10th anniversary of ACON and we asked ourselves whether the word 'crisis' should still be included in our mission statement. For many, the sense of crisis has waned, for many with HIV positive people, living a crisis everyday was not how they lead their lives. But we concluded crisis is not only useful but essential. Despite all that has happened in the last ten years, there is still a desperate need for treatments, for protection from discrimination, for care and support and for new and better messages about prevention and health maintenance. The crisis is as real as ever.

The most obvious physical change to ACON in Sydney was the move to Commonwealth Street. ACON's previous accommodation had become untenable. Two buildings, neither of them suited to our purposes and, most importantly, neither of which encouraged a focus on the needs of clients, were replaced by one. It has been fitted to meet our needs and, thanks to the foresight of the then State Government, has been provided at a peppercorn rent for ten years. There are still problems, such as the air conditioning, the lifts and the configuration of some of the meeting spaces. However, everyone must agree that the new building is a vast improvement and will get better over time.

It is important to acknowledge the hard work of a few key people in securing the building for us. First and foremost, thanks must go to Peter Grogan who worked tirelessly to get the Commonwealth Street premises; also to David Buchanan and Don Baxler at ACON and Andrew Harper and Marise Payne in the then Premier's office. Finally, thanks to John Fahey himself, who took a personal interest in the project and whose support was

vital to achieving the outcome that we did. It was fitting that, as Premier, John Fahey opened the building in February. We should not forget that not long ago a politician, especially from the conservative side of politics, would have shied away from publicly identifying with an HIV/AIDS and gay related community group such as ACON. Thanks must also go to the ACON staff, led by Kevin Golding, who brought about the move and helped the organisation settle in.

The second big upheaval was the NSW State election in March. The campaign was particularly notable for ACON for two reasons.

Firstly, ACON adopted a highly effective strategy of lobbying for commitments for key HIV/AIDS related policies. This resulted in a number of bipartisan commitments to vital issues such as support for a Third National Strategy and the maintenance of funding for HIV/AIDS services. It also produced a series of specific commitments from the new Government, some of which have been honoured, while others are in the process of being incorporated into program for legislative reform. The Government, in particular the Attorney General, has an ambitious agenda which should prove of value to the HIV/AIDS and gay and lesbian communities.

One of the issues for ACON in the coming year will be to hold the NSW Government to its promises and maintain pressure for further, much needed, reform and support. After the election ACON established good relationships with the new Government, especially the Minister for Health, Dr Helshaugo, and it is expected that those relationships will stand us in good stead during its term.

The second issue in the campaign was the division in the gay and lesbian community surrounding the contest for the seat of Bligh. This resulted in ACON and some of its office bearers, including myself, being subject to criticism for being involved in the campaign. It was disturbing to see that so many in the community, on both sides, seemed unwilling to respect the rights of others to hold different views. One of the strengths of our community has been our ability to celebrate and draw strength from difference. It is important to focus on that which unites us rather than on the divisions, because even strong institutions and bonds can too easily be damaged, to the detriment of all.

On the policy and lobbying front it has been a very busy year. I will list just some of the highlights.

- ACON has been active in the review of the Second National Strategy and, with AFAO, in the process of lobbying for a third. This has been, and will remain, our number one agenda item at the Federal level.
- Renewed activism around treatments which saw some early results followed by a commitment from the Federal Health Minister to examine the issue of



ACON President Bruce Meagher

finance approvals for new treatments (the results of this initiative are yet to be seen)

- ACON kicked off the euthanasia debate by publishing *Choosing to Die* in 1994. Then, soon after the Northern Territory Parliament passed its historic legislation, ACON's Euthanasia Working Group produced a draft bill which has focused the debate in NSW and increased the push for reform. The result of our efforts is far from certain and a great deal remains to be done
- A new gay men's education strategy was launched redoubling our efforts in the community most affected by the HIV epidemic
- A lesbian safe sex guide was launched, as was a handbook for sex workers
- ACON assisted the Transgender Liberation Coalition in lobbying for reform of the Anti-Discrimination Act
- A tentative start was made on developing a relationship with Aboriginal communities, especially Aboriginal gay men
- ACON undertook to oversee a review of the Day Centre
- A Code of Conduct for sex on premises venues was developed and launched

We lost some important people who have contributed to ACON and the HIV community over many years, including Mark Cashman, Brenton Heath-Kerr, David McDiarmid, Neil Sanderson, Robert van Maanen, Graham Bray and Andrew Morgan. Their dedication will not be forgotten.

1994-95 was the first year in ACON's history when Lex Watson was not a member of the Committee and Gerald Lawrence retired after many years of tireless service. Their work over the years was greatly valued and their absence sorely felt. ACON also saw the departure of Anne Malcolm, whose seven years of wisdom and calming influence is greatly missed.

Don Baxler deserves special praise for his dedication and skill. It was fitting that the State Government saw fit to appoint him to the Board of the newly formed South Eastern Sydney Area Health Service. This is a tribute to Don's ability and an astute choice by the Government.

Finally thanks to all of the Committee, staff, volunteers and supporters who kept the organisation running despite the pressures, the problems and the criticism. Much of ACON's work is not glamorous or newsworthy: it's the hard, day-to-day grind of many small tasks underpinning the community's response. This report throws light on that detail.

• Bruce Meagher



Community groups and organisations receiving funds from ACON's major annual fundraiser, the Hand in Hand Party. This year \$12,000 was handed to a number of groups around NSW.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

1994/95 was the first full year of ACON operating within the ambit of our five year Strategic Plan. I am pleased to report that the work of ACON has benefited significantly from the development and implementation of the Plan. The investment we put into it last year is paying off. The sense of direction and focus on strategic objectives included in all planning and decision-making in the organisation has lead to improved services and programs for clients and the community and substantially more strategic thinking within the organisation.

A full review of the Strategic Plan, completed in April 1995, indicated progress towards achieving most of its objectives. This report will cover much of that progress.

1994/95 Key Themes

From the Director's chair the pre-eminent themes across the organisation have been the implementation of the Strategic Plan; managing the NSW state election; a revival of interest and action around treatments issues; development of a new Gay Men's Education Strategy, and the consolidation of team and branch operations within ACON.

Strategic Plan implementation

Work by all units and branches in the organisation is now guided by half yearly Action Plans, with all activities tied to (at least) one of the Plan's strategic objectives. This has assisted staff and many volunteers in having a direct and clear understanding of ACON's overall direction and priorities, and ensures we work towards them. Implementation of Action Plans has been less successful at the Working Group and Committee level. This needs to be addressed through 1995/96.

NSW State Election

ACON's strategy of identifying the 11 key policy issues and obtaining detailed public responses to them from the major parties worked very effectively. It clarified for the community what the major strategic issues in HIV

AIDS are and it provided a mechanism for the parties to commit in writing to policy positions on all these issues.

Treatments issues revitalisation

After about 18 months of virtual dormancy, interest and energy was sparked by the Rifabutin controversy, coinciding with a Treatments Update meeting organised by ACON. Following resolution of the Rifabutin issue, ACON has continued to play a leading role in the series of issues around access to trials and treatments of more promising new drugs - 3TC, Zidovudine, Stavudine - in concert with PLWHA (NSW) and AFAO. This has led to some improvements in compassionate access schemes for these drugs and also to an audit review of the gap between approval and funding of HIV drugs, ordered by Commonwealth Minister Lawrence.

Response on this issue was complicated by the relative lack of people with expertise in this now extremely complex area. However, the revival of the ACON Treatments Working Group, recruitment of a new and experienced Treatments Officer and work we are doing in planning a comprehensive treatments training program augur well for the future.

For the first time in three years the development of treatment drugs - particularly of protease inhibitors - looks promising, with the prospect of substantial health improvements, even for those with advanced HIV disease. Concerted action will be required, however, to ensure all people who could benefit through compassionate access programs and early approval of these drugs are able to do so.

Development of Gay Men's Education Strategy

Outcome 4.1 of ACON's Strategic Plan calls for "cyclical review of education programs for gay men to ensure optimum effectiveness", in the context of new research findings and ongoing media debate in the community media, ACON decided on a full-scale review of our education strategies for gay men. After five months intensive consultation, research and discussion the Gay Men's Education Strategy, 1995-97 was adopted in July.

This is the first full review of such strategies since 1987 and has a ready proved beneficial in revitalising ACON's education programs for gay men, and a stimulus for similar reviews by the Commonwealth & other AIDS Councils.

The need for such a strategy overhaul was realised with the publication of our 'Fucking without Condoms' insert in the Sydney Star Observer in November, 1994. This represented the first major change from the 'safe sex every time' message which had predominated since the mid-1980s.

ACON is now embarking on a similar exercise to develop a MSM strategy over the next six months.



ACON Executive Director Don Baxter

Team, Unit and Branch Operations

ACON's growth over the ten years of the epidemic has largely been through an accretion of single projects. Binding these into effective teams and into program operations has always been a difficult - if barely visible - challenge.

In 1994/95 we continued to focus on fostering better output by team operations, with some significant advances. Some particularly innovative work by the ACON Illawarra Branch led by Daniel Maddedu has set a lead for the organisation.

The move to more suitable office space at the Hunter office and in Surry Hills has allowed teams to operate much more effectively through co-location, more efficient spaces and systems and better client focus. At the management level we have moved to systematise participation by the branches through a quarterly management forum.

Adjustments have been made to the education units in line with the Gay Men's Education Strategy, and the Care, Housing and Transport Unit has moved a considerable way to integrating its projects in order to provide a "seamless" service from the client's point of view. Such changes require the development of commitment to the changes from the staff, and that of interested community members.

There is still a substantial way to go in moving from project to program operations in some areas. This is an ongoing challenge which will continue to need attention over the next 12 months.

External Relations: Government & Community

Through a period of significant change ACON has managed to retain and/or develop sound relations with all levels of government, with community organisations and relevant parts of the health sector. We retained good relations with the Coalition Government's Health Minister Ron Phillips and have developed productive relations with Andrew Refshauge, the current Minister, and Jillian Skinner, the Shadow Minister. We have also established good relations with Premier Bob Carr and Attorney-General Jeff Shaw. Given the legislative reform agenda outlined in our election issues statement these relations will be important in achieving our legislative objectives.

Relations with the NSW Department of Health's AIDS and Infectious Diseases Branch continue to be constructive. Ross O'Donoghue has continued the consultative and vigorous leadership role of the Branch estab-

lished under David Lowe, who retired in July 1994. However, ACON was highly critical in the mainstream media of the Department's Chief Medical Officer over his handling of the HIV positive obstetrician at King George V Hospital.

Our relations with community organisations has been productive in most cases, with the occasional hiccup. We collaborated closely with the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Association for its Parade and Party, using our 10th anniversary as a parade theme.

Similarly we have been working closely with the Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby on a range of issues of mutual concern, including same-sex relationships, transgender anti-discrimination and police activities. This has been a most productive relationship, characterised by mutual support based on clear recognition of separate roles.

Earlier this year we established a Venue Owners Working Group. This has brought together a range of venue owners and resulted in some useful initiatives around safe sex environment improvements, as well as more directly encouraging venues to fulfil their community responsibilities in responding to the epidemic. A key achievement was the revision and re-launching of a Venues Code of Practice.

In the HIV/AIDS sector we have been working through some complex issues around fundraising with the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation and the AIDS Trust, with considerable progress being made. We have had occasion to be critical of SOPY (Support of Positive Youth) and have required some clear delineations of work areas and protocols for their participation in programs involving positive youth.

ACON continues to play a leading role in AFAO, particularly around work for a Third National HIV/AIDS Strategy and through providing considerable drive on other policy advice and priority-setting. The location of AFAO in Sydney has enhanced liaison without impinging on AFAO's responsibilities to its other members.

Through 1994/95 we consolidated our relations with a number of the Area Health Services, manifested in joint projects with the Wentworth, Illawarra, Hunter, Southern Sydney and Central Sydney Area Health Services, and considerable groundwork with Northern Sydney.

Relations with Eastern Sydney Area Health remained erratic and less than optimum. Its amalgamation with Southern Sydney Area provides an opportunity to forge a more systematic and productive relationship.

Major Policy Issues & Advocacy

In addition to the treatment issues and the gay men's

education strategy outlined above, ACON has continued to play a leading role across the range of HIV/AIDS policy and advocacy issues, including:

Euthanasia

ACON initiated the public debate in NSW with the publication in November of *Changing to Die*, a handbook for those considering euthanasia and those asked to assist. The Northern Territory legislation and the NSW election opened a window of opportunity for legislative reform which is not likely to recur.

The release of our draft bill has advanced the community debate considerably, moving it to focus on what sort of legislation is most desirable.

Testing of pregnant women

ACON continued to successfully marshal opposition to the series of calls - perhaps ongoing campaign is a better description - for testing of pregnant women. These arose during the King George V obstetrician case in October and a series of proposed research projects arising from that case.

AIDS related poverty and "food crisis"

Retirement from work brings a cluster of difficult issues for many people with HIV/AIDS, some of which manifest as immediate issues such as inadequate funds for food; others of which are more nebulous, particularly of how to gain meaning from not being in a workplace environment.

ACON has been tackling these issues on a number of levels. Our priority has been to re-establish the effectiveness of the Sydney Day Centre as the major provider of adequate lunches on a daily basis. After

long resistance from Eastern Area Health Service we commissioned a review which has seen some improvements already, with substantial upgrading of both its food services and activities services due in the next 12 months.

The larger systemic problem - inadequacy of the health care pension and the possibility of supplementation for people with high-cost chronic conditions - requires a much more detailed strategy and campaign which is still in its early stages.

NSW Royal Commission into Police

The Police Royal Commission is having a number of impacts on the HIV/AIDS program. The most serious is the closure of "shooting rooms" in Kings Cross, thereby inadvertently jeopardising Australia's low rate of infection among injecting drug users and potentially threatening the needle and syringe exchange program. The Commission's activities has also led to closure of a number of brothels and raids on some gay bars.

ACON has been actively alerting the Commission to its possibly deleterious effects on public health and working with NUAA (NSW Users and AIDS Association), the Health Department and other relevant agencies to minimise the dangers.

Sex Industry law reform

ACON has been working closely with SWOP to encourage the government to enact the Disorderly House Amendment Act. The current legislation hinders HIV/AIDS outreach work to sex workers (as well as promoting corruption). Prospects are promising.

North Coast region AIDS funding

Our Northern Rivers and Mid-North Coast Branches had serious concerns about the allocation and expenditure of AIDS funds in the North Coast district health services, and its strategic planning generally. The Department has agreed to investigate this region as part of a general review of the districts and areas in a full review of the funding formula for NSW HIV services.

Prisons policy

ACON has been working with a range of community organisations to develop a comprehensive policy on HIV and prisons. After almost a year in gestation, consensus has finally emerged in this difficult area. We hope our policy will reinvigorate the public debate about HIV and prisons.

St Vincent's Hospital

As the largest treatment centre it is not surprising that St Vincent's continues to be a focus of advocacy for ACON. Through late 1994 ACON was involved in negotiations with St Vincent's about its proposed contract



ACON has maintained good relations with both the Government and the Opposition throughout 1994/95. Pictured at this recent meeting with Health Minister Dr Andrew Refshaeger (second from left) are (from left) Executive Director Don Baxter, President Bruce Maagher and Vice-President Mark Hoskins.

with the (then) Coalition government, and subsequently opposed to the proposals. We are currently monitoring the impact of the government's Resource Allocation Formula on St Vincent's and consequent proposals to reduce various services at the hospital. This will remain a serious issue for the foreseeable future.

Police and beats

ACON continued our long negotiations with the NSW Police Service about appropriate behaviour of police officers at beats. It appears the Police Service is about to issue a Commissioner's Instruction, which should be of considerable assistance to our beats outreach work. These negotiations have also developed other areas of co-operation with the police, particularly around responding to violence at beats and assisting with murder investigations.

Program Changes & Consolidations

ACON's overall program expanded marginally this year. Recurrent funding was confirmed for a number of priority projects. These included the Positive Youth Project, the With Compliments newsletter, Women Partners of Bisexual Men, and HIV Information Workshops. Some internal readjustments are also allowing us to expand some services within existing resources. Significant expansions and changes included:

Positive retreats

A special grant from the residue of the Mark Fitzpatrick Trust has allowed us to plan and conduct four-day retreats for positive people on a regular basis, using the model successfully developed by the HIV Support team.

Counselling

An AIDS Trust grant has allowed us to design and conduct a training program for volunteer counsellors, allowing us to expand our hours to some Saturdays and alter standard work-hours. Nevertheless we are still not able to offer counselling to HIV negative people. Positive Women's Screentime An AIDS Trust grant has allowed us to develop a volunteer-staffed phone line (restricted hours) to provide support to positive women by other positive women. The line will be operational from September.

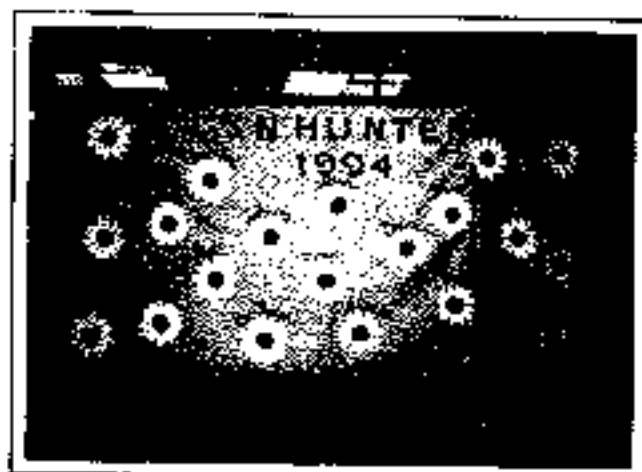
Mid-North Coast care & support

Following the ongoing problems with care and support services in the region the AIDS/ID Branch agreed to train a care and support worker at the Mid-North Coast office over the next 12 months.

Community Support

Network/Housing/Transport

Work has proceeded in integrating the transport and



One of 13 panels for the National Quilt Project made through ACON Hunter in 199-1995. Quilt workshops are one way in which the local HIV community has contributed to the work of the Branch.

housing services into the CSN program to provide better service to our clients. The transport program has been totally re-structured in a way which has been welcomed by clients and also allows it to operate within budget for the first time since ACON assumed responsibility for it.

Asian Project re-vitalisation

The Asian Gay Men's program has been revitalised through an internal review and, at times, painful series of community meetings. Its new format has seen a revival of interest and participation from a wider range of Asian gay men.

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islanders

ACON Ilawarra has established a successful model of providing services for Aboriginal people in the Ilawarra area. This model is currently being discussed by the Sydney Aboriginal & Islander Working Group with a similar model likely to be implemented soon in Sydney and possibly other branches.

Family Support workers

We have been funded to develop a program to provide respite care for families with HIV positive members (parents or children), working with the major substitute care agencies (Bernardos, etc.) Planning for the program has been completed and it will commence in late 1995.

Writers workshops

Funded through an Australian Council grant, Communications lecturer Michael Hursey organised a series of Writers Workshops with more than 70 participants: the objective was to assist the community - through their writing - to achieve a better understanding of the impact of the epidemic.

HARC Legal Project

We have spent a frustrating year lobbying to ensure the

viability of the Legal Project. Commonwealth Health funding was removed in June 1994, with the project surviving only on a small grant from Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department and a fixed term grant from NSW Health. Prospects look reasonable for an increase in funding - but we have felt that previously. The HALC Management Committee believes the service cannot continue if further funding is not forthcoming.

Major Events, Campaigns & Resources

The Chronology section of this annual report documents the disparate range of events, campaigns and publications which ACON produced over through 1994/95. I would like to highlight the major ones:

- The annual Candlelight Rally attracted over 12,000 participants this year
- The Sydney Safe Sex Zone campaign conducted around the Mardi Gras period
- The Hand-In-Hand Party raised over \$40,000 on the Queens Birthday Weekend
- *Choosing to Die*, our booklet on euthanasia, distributed over 6000 copies and was reproduced in Queensland
- *Fucking Without Condoms* was the first campaign in the world to address the difficult issue of negotiated safety
- *The Lesbian Sex Book*, a comprehensive 80 page booklet on lesbians and possible HIV risks, is the first detailed resource for lesbians in the ten years of the epidemic
- *Doing it Ourselves - a guide to Caring for People with HIV/AIDS at Home*, a 75 page book and audiotape, is based largely on the experiences of CSN volunteer home carers
- self-portrait in latex, Brenton Heath-Kerr's costume sponsored by ACON, was included in the Australian National Gallery's Art in the Age of AIDS Exhibition, November 1994
- Premier John Falvey opened the ACON offices at 9 Commonwealth Street in February 1995

Internal Operations

Management Team

The ACON Management Team continued to develop and provide effective leadership and direction in achieving ACON's objectives throughout the year. The Team's work has been supplemented by quarterly 2 day meetings with the Branch Managers, called the Management Forum.

The Team owes much of its development to Deputy Di-

rector, Anne Malcolm, who retired from ACON in March this year. Anne's commitment to team processes and solutions and her persistence in working through problems went a long way to ensuring the stability and competence of the team in successfully leading the organisation towards its objectives.

Kevin Golding ably acted as Deputy Director for three months, bringing some new perspectives and energies to the role, and Paul Kinder has recently taken up the position permanently.

In addition to managing the policy and program achievements outlined throughout this report the Management Team has also:

- planned and overseen the successful relocation of the Sydney offices with only one day's closure
- conducted a comprehensive review of ACON's staff recruitment policies
- finalised ACON's Enterprise Agreement
- re-evaluated all positions within ACON in the light of the Agreement
- conducted a review of ACON's volunteer strategy
- taken on responsibility for more of the external representation and negotiations for the Council
- within the constraints of a major relocation, maintaining overall expenditure within projected budget while all programs and services are at near full operational level

ACON has developed a team of skilled managers and needs to ensure resources continue to be put towards its development and effective operation. I have also been pleased with the depth of management talent in the organisation, seen through a range of project staff participating in the management team in temporary positions. We have now established a training program for staff interested in this area.

HESTA superannuation

On 17 February 1995, in what amounted to an ambush, our superannuation fund, HESTA, informed us that we would not be able to offer disability & death cover insurance to any newly recruited staff who were HIV positive.

This move seriously jeopardises our capacity to attract HIV-positive people to work in the organisation, particularly in view of the widespread removal of exclusion clauses in most large superannuation schemes. It has also generated severe anxiety among existing staff who are positive, the manner in which HESTA brought on the arrangement understandably provides little grounds for trust that they will honour their current commitments, notwithstanding their re-stated commitments to meet these obligations.

We have been working with AFAO to achieve a solution to this vexatious situation. The Commonwealth Government is sympathetic in principle but unlikely to move

quickly to fund us directly or to force the superannuation industry to create a pool to meet these liabilities. Negotiations with all parties involved are continuing, but the likelihood of a solution to our problem for newly recruited HIV positive staff is not clear at this point.

Internal financial management and operations

As our financial reports indicate ACON is reporting a deficit of around \$160,000 this year. Our financial operations have been complicated by the grants and arrangements associated with the Sydney Office relocation.

With virtually all projects at ACON now operating at full capacity those areas of our operations which have been consistently under-funded can no longer be sustained on savings from other areas. These have been Tilly's Transport, Executive Unit, Mid-North Coast, Illawarra and Western Sydney.

Fortunately the office relocation has allowed us to negotiate with the AIDS/D Branch for rent savings to be put towards these structural operating deficits (as well as some priority expansions). This will mean a more stable financial planning environment for managing the organisation.

Notwithstanding the financial complexities of the move, the Management Team achieved further reductions in administration costs and some system costs. Opportunities for further savings, however, are most likely to involve cuts in services. In the 1995/96 budget we will not be providing relief for staff on leave which will effectively mean some reductions in service.



Many ACON projects rely on the valuable commitment of volunteers. Pictured are volunteer workers for the Speak Easy Project, who conduct outreach education in Sydney's inner-city gay venues.

Anne Malcolm

I want to conclude this report with a tribute to Anne Malcolm. Anne is one of the barely-visible heroes of ACON. She has devoted the last seven years of her life and work to the organisation, bringing a unique set of skills, insights, persistence, toughness and gentle good humour to the organisation.

Anne came to ACON from the Social Work Department of St Vincent's Hospital, spending the first three years building up the community services program of ACON. She was appointed to the newly-created Deputy Director position in 1991.

Her key responsibility was managing the internal operations of ACON. While Anne and I worked closely on changing ACON from a medium-sized, "top-down" organisation to a flatter, more collaborative one - too large for hard hierarchies to work effectively, it was mostly her work.

Her capacity to develop processes and systems which engendered both results and trust in the process allowed ACON to have a staff focussed on work, not on organisational machinations. In a similar vein ACON has had no serious financial problems and no serious industrial disputes: this is not good luck. It is good management, including training managers to be good at their work.

Notwithstanding her interest and focus on organisational operations Anne always maintained a lively interest in health system dynamics generally and HIV/AIDS issues in particular. In both of these areas I found her enormously supportive and refreshing to debate and discuss various strategies, tactics and issues. That partnership has also been of particular - albeit all but invisible - valuable to ACON and to people affected by and living with HIV in NSW. I thank her for her contribution.

- Don Baxter

ACON BRANCHES AND PROJECTS

ACON Hunter

Servicing Newcastle and the Central Coast region of NSW, the Branch provides a range of education, outreach, counselling and support services to people with HIV/AIDS, gay men and men who have sex with other men (MSMs). CSN Hunter trains and coordinates volunteers to provide practical, physical and emotional support and services for people with HIV/AIDS. ACON Hunter was established in May 1988 and is based in Newcastle.

ACON Illawarra

Established in July 1990 and located in Wollongong, the Branch provides education, outreach and community development programs for gay men, MSMs and people with HIV/AIDS in the Illawarra and South Coast region. CSN also offers care and services from ACON Illawarra.



Staff and volunteers of ACON Illawarra in late 1994.

ACON Mid-North Coast

The Branch provides education programs to gay men and MSMs and operates a needle and syringe exchange. Information about HIV/AIDS is available from the Branch, and they can make referrals to other services. The region serviced by ACON Mid-North Coast, which is located in Coffs Harbour, extends from Red Rock (north of Coffs Harbour), south to Port Macquarie and inland to Dorrigo. The Branch was established in July 1990.

ACON Northern Rivers

Through education and community development programs, the Branch provides specific support services to, and advocacy for, people with HIV/AIDS, gay men and MSMs. A vitamin service, needle and syringe exchange and resource service also operate from the Branch, which is located in Lismore and services the far northern area of NSW. ACON Northern Rivers was established in November 1988.

Care, Housing and Transport Unit (CHAT)

Community Support Network (CSN)

Established to provide practical home care for people with HIV/AIDS, CSN held its first training course over a decade ago in September 1984. CSN trains dedicated volunteers to provide services such as basic personal care, cooking, cleaning, ironing, gardening, shopping and pet care. Since March 1994 ACON has managed the provision of services to clients and a Carers Representative Committee is responsible for looking after the needs of carers. CSN also operates from the Charles Street office in Parramatta and in the Newcastle and Wollongong branches.

Housing Project

ACON was first funded to provide accommodation services in January 1990, which included assisting clients to access priority public housing; providing transfer advice; and dealing with homelessness issues, private rental and housing discrimination and harassment. Housing services also administer houses and units for clients who are waiting for public housing.

Tiffany's Transport

ACON has provided a transport for over 8000 passengers to hospitals, the PLWHA Luncheon Club and other essential services. Tiffany's Transport has recently undergone a major review to streamline its service and is being merged with CSN for a more efficient and flexible service provision.

Charles Street, Parramatta (Western Sydney Unit)

The Western Sydney Unit of ACON was formed in September 1992 to provide support and education services to people with HIV/AIDS, MSMs and gay men living in Sydney's outer west.

CSN Western Sydney

Volunteer carers provide home care for people with HIV/AIDS who live in the outer western suburbs and Blue Mountains. A full-time worker coordinates the service with the assistance of volunteer office workers.

Outreach Education Project

This Project, which commenced in May 1988 & was originally based in the Sydney office, provides education & support to men who use "beats" - public places men meet to have sex with other men - in the Sydney metropolitan area. Liaison with police and health care workers is also part of the Outreach Education Project's work. Outreach education is also conducted in all ACON branches.

Wentworth Area MSM Educator

In collaboration with the Wentworth Area Health Service, the Western Sydney Unit provides support, advocacy and education services to non-gay identifying men who have sex with other men. Services offered include a regular drop-in support group and phone line.

Youth Peer Education Project (Fun and Esteem)

The Youth Peer Education Project provides services and runs workshops for young gay men under 26 living in the Western Suburbs. A newsletter, regular drop-in groups and Start Making Sense workshops are some of the activities offered by the Project.

Client Liaison and Information Unit

Client Liaison Team

Operating the organisation's busy reception and switch, the Client Liaison team works very much on the "frontline" of ACON. In addition to referring clients to appropriate projects, services or external organisations, the Team also makes appointments for the Counsellors and Housing Project. It also runs the busy Vitamin and Nutritional Supplements Service, which provides cost-price products to people with HIV/AIDS. The Service has been operating since March 1987.

Information Services

Aiming to raise the profile and community awareness of ACON services, the Information Team distributes resources to a wide variety of individuals, organisations and community groups. The Team also ensures that internal information exchange keeps staff and volunteers informed of the organisation's activities.

Library

The ACON Library was set up in March 1990 and is one of five libraries which form the NSW HIV/AIDS Library Network. It specialises in education, social and psychosocial aspects of HIV/AIDS, legal issues and treatments. Books, journals, videos, newspaper clippings, pamphlets and posters make up the collection, which to date has over 4000 indexed articles.

HIV Strategy and Support Unit

Counselling

ACON offers a free and professional counselling service- including a Spanish speaking counsellor (Por la Vida) - to anyone living with or affected by HIV/AIDS. The Counselling Team also conducts a support group for HIV negative partners of people with HIV.

HIV/AIDS Legal Centre (HALC)

HALC started as a community legal service in August 1992, although several legal projects have existed at ACON since early 1988. It provides free advice and assistance on all HIV related matters, including discrimination and harassment, wills, superannuation, confidentiality and employment. Although HALC employs one legal officer, it is largely through the efforts of volunteers that the service continues.

HIV Support

A large range of services specifically for HIV positive people are offered by this Project. Initially funded in May 1989, HIV Support conducts information forums on a number of issues, ranging from the latest information on treatments and drug trials to HIV positive sexuality and international travel and runs regular support groups providing an opportunity for people with HIV to exchange experiences, discuss their needs and make contact with other HIV positive people at a social level. The Project also organises social activities such as weekend retreats and barbecues where HIV positive people can network in a safe and comfortable environment.

NSW Treatments Information Project

The Treatments Project monitors the wide range of treatment issues which affect people with HIV/AIDS and disseminates this information to other ACON projects and directly to HIV positive people. The Project also provides advocacy for the availability of drugs and therapies for the positive community.

Positive Youth Project

This Project was only recently established to provide support and meet the specific needs of young HIV positive gay men under the age of 26. The Project offers closed support groups & information to its target group.

Organisational Services Unit

Administration and Computer Support

Administration provides internal support to the entire organisation through provision of petty cash, stationery, fleet maintenance and office equipment maintenance. Computer support includes network maintenance, software purchasing, desk top publishing and general computer-related support to volunteers and staff.

Finance

The Finance Team oversees the smooth financial running of the organisation and offers assistance to unit and branch managers in supervising project budgets.

Human Resources

The Personnel Team are responsible for recruitment advertising, payroll, staff records and offering assistance

to staff in relation to employment practices and procedures. Human resources also offer secretarial assistance to the Joint Consultative Committee, a forum for staff feedback on issues which affect the internal operation of ACON, and participates in the formulation of personnel policy and industrial agreements.

Staff Training

The Staff Trainer assists staff and volunteers in meeting the training and job development needs of their projects.

Staff and Volunteer Counsellor

This position, created in 1990, provides professional counselling to volunteers and staff with personal or work-related issues.

Volunteer Project

Since its establishment ACON has relied on the valuable support of volunteers to carry out much of its work. The Volunteer Project works to meet the needs of volunteers across the organisation and to ensure that the work they perform is appropriately recognised. The Project also assists other ACON projects by providing volunteers assistance when needed.

Peer Education Unit

Asian Project

A number of support and referral services are offered to Sydney's gay and lesbian Asian community through this project, which commenced in 1989. These include Silk Road, a social group for gay and bisexual men which provides a forum for support and education; Supporting Positive Asians, a group providing assistance to men and women in the Asian community affected by or living with HIV/AIDS; and Yum Cha, a support group for HIV positive Asians.

Mature Aged Gay Men's Project

Since October 1991, this Project has provided support, education and advocacy for gay men and MSM over 40. With its own steering committee, the Project undertakes a wide range of activities including involvement in community events, combating ageism and raising the self-esteem of mature aged gay men.

Rural Project

The Rural Project provides information and services to people with HIV/AIDS, gays and lesbians in country NSW. It publishes a regular newsletter, rural gaze, conducts peer education training and assists people through advocating for their rights. The Project was established in July 1988.

Youth Peer Education Project (Fun & Esteem)

Fun and Esteem has been providing support and infor-

mation services to young gay men under the age of 26 since September 1988. Regular workshops and drop-in groups are offered to people seeking new a social and support network, and provide a forum for them to discuss issues such as sexuality, safe sex and self-esteem. Youth projects have also been established in the Western Sydney Unit, Campbelltown and the Blue Mountains.

Policy and Women's Unit

Women and AIDS Project

Providing a focus on women's issues and resourcing other HIV/AIDS and women's health services, the Women and AIDS Project also develops State-wide education and policy on HIV related issues which affect women. The Project was initially funded in March 1989, but a Working Group was initially established in 1988.

Women's HIV Support Project

Incorporating Positive Women, this Project provides women living with HIV/AIDS safe, confidential support and referral on a non-judgemental basis. Support groups and individual counselling is offered by the Project, which also produces resources for HIV positive women. The service has been operating since 1991.

Women Partners of Bisexual Men Project

Established in February 1993, this Project provides support and advocacy for women whose male partners are having sex with other men. Peer support groups offer the women partners a safe and friendly environment in which to meet. The Project has also produced resources to provide safe sex information specifically for its target group.

Media Liaison

Established in February 1994, this position monitors media coverage of HIV/AIDS issues and promotes ACON's activities in both the mainstream and gay media. Funding for the position is entirely from non-government sources and has ensured HIV/AIDS (and ACON) has a much more proactive and responsible media coverage.

Policy Development

The Policy Development Officer is active in formulating a broad range of ACON policies, ranging from prisons to universal HIV testing to euthanasia. Policy Development also regularly assists external organisations in formulating appropriate HIV/AIDS policies.

Sydney Gay Education Unit

Campaign Planning

Originally known as the Annual Campaign, this project develops ACON's major education campaigns for the Sydney gay community. Recently the focus of the position has changed from an emphasis on one large-scale campaign every 12 months to a number of smaller campaigns addressing specific important issues affecting gay men's health.

Gay and Lesbian Injecting Drug Use Project (GLIDUP)

Since it started in 1991, GLIDUP has addressed injecting and drug issues through outreach to minimise the transmission and impact of HIV on gay men and lesbians who inject.

Speak Easy (Venues Outreach)

Project This Project conducts outreach education to gay men in Sydney's inner-city gay venues to promote safe sex issues. The service it provides is informal and regularly relies on interesting and unique ways of reaching its target audience, such as the Safe Sex Sluts, a groups of volunteers who hand out safe sex packs at major dance parties and in venues. Speak Easy started in October 1993.

Sydney Gay Men's Project

Since August 1993 the Sydney Gay Men's Project has developed and implemented workshops aiming to address the needs of inner-Sydney gay men. The emphasis of the Project is to improve self-esteem amongst gay men in relationships and negotiating safe sex.

Venues Liaison Project

This Project provides inner-city gay venues with ACON-produced resources and supplies of condoms and lubricant to promote a safe sex culture amongst venue patrons. Venues Liaison encourages the active involvement of venue owners in the planning of ACON's education strategies.

• JULY •

Media

- The Fun and Esteem Project was represented in a *Sydney Morning Herald* article discussing coming out and safe sex.
- *Talkabout*, the monthly publication of PLWHA (NSW), consulted ACON's Rural Project for a special rural edition.

Branches

- ACON Illawarra received funding from the HIV Prevention Service for a HIV Community Development Project. The new Project aimed to address the needs of HIV positive people by fostering a sense of community.
- In Newcastle, CSN conducted its fifth Carer's Training Program. The training was attended by 16 people from the Hunter region, Muswellbrook and the Mid-North Coast Branch. Over 120 people attended the fundraising event "CSN Hunter Christmas in July", which was organised by CSN Hunter's Advisory Committee and CSN carers.
- ACON Northern Rivers held the first of a series of lunches for HIV positive people living in the Lismore region. The well attended event proved to be an effective way to develop support networks between individuals.



- Following a report to the Central Coast Area Health Service, an additional \$4000 was allocated to the ACON Hunter Education Outreach Project. The additional funds allowed the service to continue its work targeting beats on the Central Coast for the rest of the year.

Policy

- Australian insurance companies began offering viatication to their customers. A popular practice in the United States and the United Kingdom, viatication allows people to cash in their life insurance policy before they die for 60-80% of the lump sum. ACON's Legal Working Group and Policy Officer drafted a policy to assist people with HIV/AIDS in getting the most from their life insurance policies.
- Together with PLWHA (NSW) and AFAO, the AIDS Council drafted a comprehensive submission on the relevance of HIV/AIDS issues to the International Year of the Family. The submission called for alternative definitions of "family", which HIV-affected communities have helped developed.

Project Activities

- A TAFE student placed with the Women and AIDS Project produces two extensive bibliographies on women and HIV issues.
- A scan of key stakeholders in the Rural Project was initiated. Twenty seven in-depth interviews were conducted, from which the feedback was incorporated into project planning. The feedback was generally positive and praised the Rural Project for "signposting" the needs of rural gay men and people with HIV/AIDS and establishing effective networks.
- With the growing demand for library services, a permanent part-time library assistant was appointed. The ACON Library now holds over 1250 books, 3950 indexed articles and 210 videos.
- With a significant increase in demand for ACON's counselling service, a volunteer counsellor was recruited. With this recruitment proving successful, a policy to utilise more volunteer counsellors was proposed and implemented. A training and supervision program is currently being devised following a successful grant application and, when completed, is expected to eventually increase the number of clients the service will be able to see from around 50 per week to 150.

Conferences and Workshops

- Vivienne Munro, Women's HIV Support Officer, and David Englebrecht, editor of the independent publication *With Complements*, visited Chiang Mai in northern Thailand at the invitation of the Northern AIDS Prevention and Care Program to speak to HIV positive people and service providers on the benefits of alternative therapies and peer support. Vivienne also addressed the Widows Support Group, which has over 200 members.
- Health workers from Madras, India visited the Asian Project to discuss issues of relevance to HIV positive Asians. The Project workers were also involved in meetings with the Southern Area Health Service and Royal Prince Alfred Hospital regarding HIV related issues for people of non-English speaking backgrounds.
- The Women Partners of Bisexual Men Project embarked on a three month tour of rural NSW to conduct workshops for health care workers. The tour aimed to widen the workers understanding of issues confronting women with bisexual partners. The workshops have been followed up by a half-yearly newsletter, *The Other Side of the Closet*, which provides an update on the Project's activities & relevant articles.
- ACON education project workers attended a conference at Macquarie University which reported on re-



cent findings from the Social Aspects of Prevention of AIDS (SAPA) Study. The Study has monitored sexual behaviour changes in gay men since 1986 and has proved valuable in providing ACON with the information necessary to direct its education campaigns to gay men.

Funding

- The Premier of NSW, John Fahey, approved \$1.1 million for the refurbishment of a new ACON Sydney office. The money, which was provided by the Premier's Department, was provided to refit the government's Grain Handling Authority Building in Commonwealth Street, Surry Hills. Mr Fahey also agreed to lease the building to ACON for ten years at the peppercorn rent of \$1 a year.

• AUGUST •

Branches

- A series of community workshops were conducted by the Northern Rivers Branch to discuss the future direction of its education program. People living with HIV/AIDS and community members were among those whose comments and ideas were sought. One issue which was identified by the consultation was the need for a lesbian and gay phone support service, which eventuated in the forming of a working party to plan its establishment.
- CSN Illawarra received funding for the first time. The service had been operating since 1989, and in the intervening five years had been staffed by dedicated volunteers.
- ACON Hunter was involved community consultation planning for the HIV Multicultural Project which aimed to raise HIV/AIDS issues amongst non-English speaking communities in the Hunter region. The meeting attracted key community leaders and provided a framework for an ongoing response to HIV epidemic.

- ACON Illawarra staffed an information stall at Wollongong University's One World Expo, providing safe sex and HIV resources to students and staff.
- The Newcastle premiere of *The Sum of Us* raised \$1200 for CSN Hunter. With limited funding provided for ACON branches, fundraising events such as these are an important way of continuing the services they provide.
- ACON Northern Rivers was amongst a number of community groups which commenced planning for a gay and lesbian festival to be held in October 1995. The aim of the festival will be to foster a sense of pride and community amongst North Coast lesbians and gay men.

Policy

- On behalf of AFAO and the Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby, ACON made a written and verbal submission before the Access to Justice Advisory Committee in Canberra. The submission argued for funding of specialist HIV legal services and for the removal of laws discriminatory to same sex couples.

Conferences and Workshops

- The Fun and Esteem Project held at workshop at the Student Representatives Council State Conference. The workshops provided an opportunity for the Conference to learn about the work of the Project, as well as become informed about issues affecting young lesbians and gays.
- ACON's Rural Project participated in the Anti-Discrimination Board's Rural NSW Consultation Meeting. The consultation aimed to identify discrimination problems for people in country areas of the state.
- The 10th International Conference on AIDS was held in Yokohama, Japan. The Asian Project and Women's HIV Support Project were projects which participated in the Conference.

en's HIV Support Project were projects which participated in the Conference.

New Resources

- A series of nine cartoons produced by artist Ian Barbour made up the first stage of the ACON Myths campaign, launched in August. Dealing with issues as varied as health maintenance through to sex for HIV positive people, the campaign addressed common myths in the gay community surrounding HIV/AIDS and the dangers these myths presented. The cartoons proved to be very popular, running for more than six months in the gay press.

Project Activities

- Tiffy's Transport produced fridge magnets for its clients and other service providers. The large print magnets, which provided the service's direct phone number, were specially designed to assist HIV positive people with deteriorating eyesight.
- A second full-time Housing Officer was appointed to assist with the increased client caseload being experienced by ACON's accommodation service.
- The Outreach Education Project, based in the Parramatta office, completed an eight month long Sydney-wide mapping project. The exercise identified known public places men obtained sex with other men around Sydney and has greatly assisted the Project expand its outreach abilities.
- The Rural Project provided consultancy to the AIDS Council of South Australia in the setting up of a local project. The model ACSA adopted was based on that of the successful NSW one of providing advocacy and support to PLWHA and gay men in isolated areas of the State. The Rural project also conducted outreach in the Mid-North Coast and Northern Rivers regions.
- The ACON Housing Project was involved in the planning and consultation process of the BGF sub-committee on supported accommodation.
- The Spanish-speaking support project, Por la Vida, continued to act as a resource and support base for Spanish people affected by HIV/AIDS. With the Project becoming increasingly well-known, other health providers were making greater use of the service. As part of the Counselling Team, the project officer regularly sees around 20 Latin-American clients and also deals extensively with their families and friends, who are often the only support for some clients.
- ACON Western Sydney's MATES Project underwent a major revamp. This project, aimed at non-gay iden-



tifying men who have sex with men, included a phone line and support groups.

- The Fun and Esteem Project found itself involved in an argument with a western Sydney high school over the placement of its posters in the school. Some parents and teachers believed the posters "promoted homosexuality". The posters were eventually removed.
- CSN was awarded the Community Service Award at the 1994 DIVA (Drag Industry Variety Awards) for its efforts in providing practical home care and support to PLWHAs.

• SEPTEMBER •

Fundraising

- Over \$2200 was raised by the Women's Team at an auction of woodcuts by artist Frans Ermenegem, which were donated by Greg Martin and the Bare Gallery in Newtown.

Project Activities

- In the weeks preceding the Sleaze Ball, 18 of ACON's Safe Sex Sluts conducted street and venue outreach in the gay and lesbian community, handing out over 3500 condoms and dental dams. The Safe Sex Sluts are a team of dedicated volunteers who provide HIV education in a fun and interesting way. They are co-ordinated by the Speak Easy Project. At the Party the Sluts handed out over 15,000 condoms and dental dams, while the GLIDUP stall - which provided information, condoms, tampons, band aids and, of course, fit packs - again proved to be a valuable outlet for party goers.
- The Women's Team held a "Scones and Dildo" fest. The popular afternoon aimed to promote safe sex and sexuality issues for women. ACON volunteers, staff and visitors were treated to champagne, scones, party food, a sex toy display, videos for women and speeches on the importance of the work of the Team.
- The first liaison meeting between the Outreach Education Project and the police service took place. The liaisons are an attempt to monitor police behaviour and activities at Sydney beats.
- The Venues Liaison Project launched wall-sized murals by artist David McDiarmid at the Den and Ken's of Kensington, two Sydney sex on premises venues. Painted in the style of McDiarmid's popular ACON poster series from 1992, the larger-than-life images depict safe sex in such venues.

Media

- A media storm erupted following the revelation that a HIV positive obstetrician had been delivering babies at King George V Hospital. ACON entered the media fray following poor handling of the case by the Chief Medical Officer of the NSW Health Department. The Council was highly critical of the Chief Medical Officer and of the hysterical and alarmist approach to the story by some of the media.
- "Healthy HIV Living in 90s", a four page guide to healthy living for people with HIV, was included as a coloured insert in the *Sydney Star Observer*. Written by the HIV Support Project, the comprehensive guide covered a wide range of topics including complementary therapies and HIV, shopping for a doctor, dentists and oral health, common opportunistic infections, recreational drug use and HIV, sleep, exercise and nutrition and sexual health for HIV positive people.

Conferences and Workshops

- The Fun and Esteem Project conducted a workshop with school counsellors on the Central Coast. The workshop discussed issues confronted by gay youth.
- The Rural Project workers attended a Victorian Rural HIV/AIDS Conference in Castlemaine, Victoria. Their attendance provided a valuable opportunity to network with other rural health workers from outside NSW.
- The Asian Project took part in a Working with Men workshop at the Family Planning Association. The workshop developed strategies to educate men who have sex with other men. The Project also took part in an SBS Committee Consultation, providing the Committee with information on HIV/AIDS issues of relevance to people of non-English speaking backgrounds.

Branches

- Koori workers from the HIV Prevention Service and the Aboriginal Medical Service were provided with space at ACON Illawarra in an effort to make the Branch more accessible to Koori clients.
- ACON Mid-North Coast's newsletter became monthly and took on a new format. Articles in the newsletter cover a wide range of topics of interest to the Branch's clients, service users and related organisations.
- A community advertising campaign was developed by the Hunter Branch. The campaign targeted at risk communities and provided information about HIV testing, the ACON "Myths" campaign, Fun and Esteem groups and peer education workshops. ACON Hunter's profile as the only outreach testing venue - which it operates from the Sexual Health Clinic at

Royal Newcastle Hospital - was heightened as the result of the advertisements.

- A newly formed Positive Well Being Fund held its first fundraising event, a Bake Off, in Wollongong. The fund can be accessed by people with HIV/AIDS in the Illawarra region.
- ACON Illawarra and the HIV Prevention Service provided education to Area Health workers in Ulladulla on the south coast of NSW.
- Thirty people took part in the first Positive Men's Retreat held by ACON Northern Rivers. The four day retreat included a variety of workshops dealing with issues of interest to participants and proved to be very popular and successful.
- Out Now, the Illawarra Branch's youth project, held its annual bike ride for young gay men who access the service. The Branch also held a successful fundraiser at Chequer's Nitespot, a lesbian and gay venue in Wollongong.



New Resources

- *Doing It Ourselves: A Guide to Caring for People with HIV/AIDS at Home* was launched at the State Library by SBS newsreader Mary Kostakidis. The 75 page book and audio tape interviewed CSN home carers on their experiences of looking after people with HIV/AIDS and provides important practical information on home care for PLWHAs.
- The Women's HIV Support Team focus-tested the final version of *My Sex*, a new resource for HIV positive women discussing sexuality issues. The brochure was approved by the NSW AIDS Bureau following months of negotiating over wording in the text which suggested women have sex without disclosing their HIV status to partners.

• OCTOBER •

Enterprise Agreement

- ACON staff voted to adopt the new ACON Enterprise Agreement. The agreement, developed by ACON management and staff, has subsequently been used as a model for other community organisations such as Sydney Gay and Lesbian Publishing, Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras, the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations and Greenpeace. Following the adoption of the new agreement, every position was reclassified.



New Resources

- ACON launched *Choosing to Die*, an information booklet for people considering euthanasia and those asked to assist, at the Fifth National Conference for PLWHA. One of the few Australian resources available on the subject, *Choosing to Die* examined the legal, political and social issues surrounding euthanasia. Following widespread media coverage, the initial print run of 500 copies ran out within a week and a further 1000 were distributed almost as quickly. The booklet proved to be one of ACON's most sought after resources, with a version reproduced by the Queensland AIDS Council. A second edition was printed in March 1995.

Conferences and Workshops

- Women's HIV Support Officer, Vivienne Munro, presented a speech at the Conference of Churches in Fiji. In her speech Vivienne argued that it was essential that church workers provide information about HIV and condoms to their parishioners.
- Two workshops were conducted by the Fun and Esteem Project for HIV positive youth. The first workshop used a discussion group model, providing an opportunity for young HIV positive men to talk about their experiences, while the second was specifically for recently diagnosed or seroconverted young gay

men. The response to the workshops highlighted the need for a new position dedicated to addressing the specific issues of HIV positive gay youth.

- HIV positive staff from ACON participated in the Fifth National Conference of PLWHAs in Sydney. Organised by the National Association of People Living with HIV/AIDS, the three day conference held workshops on a range of issues affecting HIV positive people and provided an opportunity for many to network with others from around Australia. One of the major issues arising from the conference was the subject of euthanasia and the right for people to refuse further medical assistance.

Branches

- Volunteers from ACON Hunter participated in training workshops for the Safe Summer Safari campaign. The Safari, which proved to be a great success in 1993-94, travelled through NSW coastal areas targeting surfies, youth and gay men. The volunteers from the Hunter Branch assisted the Safari on its Central Coast leg.
- Over \$2500 was raised by the Northern Rivers Branch's HIV Wellness Fund when 400 people attended the opening night of *Priscilla Queen of the Desert*.
- ACON Northern Rivers gained representation on a new lesbian and gay police consultative committee. The committee was established to improve access to police services by lesbians and gays to police services in the Northern Rivers region.
- In a move to raise awareness about HIV and safe sex issues, volunteers from the Hunter Branch attended a number of venues in the Newcastle-Central Coast area. ACON Illawarra was extensively involved in Wollongong University's Sexuality Week, presenting talks and providing support and information around HIV related issues. The Branch was also involved in the unfolding of the AIDS Memorial Quilt at the Wollongong Art Gallery.

Project Activities

- The Counselling Team devised a new support group for HIV negative partners of HIV positive people, which received widespread community support and was well received by participants. Following the success of the new group there was a large number of enquiries about further workshops.
- The Asian Project was one of several ACON projects which took part in a Sydney conference on domestic violence in gay and lesbian relationships. The Project presented a paper on issues confronted by partners in such relationships from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Policy

- Following a push by some HIV researchers to instigate universal antenatal testing on both pregnant women and new born babies, ACON's Women and AIDS Working Group revised and updated its policy on this issue. The new policy argued it was unacceptable to test anyone without prior knowledge that the test was going to be conducted and that HIV testing should only ever take place with informed consent. It was later adopted by AFAO's Women and AIDS Working Group and was used as the basis for recommendations to the NSW Ministerial Advisory Committee on AIDS Strategy.

• NOVEMBER •

Project Activities

- With funding approved for a second project worker for Women's HIV Support, ACON was able to employ a second openly positive woman. The Project held a dinner to provide a social space for positive women to meet and find out more about its work.
- The Organisation Services Unit employed a part-time Computer Systems Support Officer to maintain ACON's computer network. The Sydney office alone has over 70 computers and almost 100 users and the system is an integral part of the organisation's client service delivery and information distribution network.
- The Fun and Esteem Project assisted in the establishment of a gay youth group in the Blue Mountains. A youth project worker was employed and is now part of the Youth Peer Education Team.
- The Outreach Education Project was substantially restructured with the establishment of a full-time coordinator position and three part-time outreach workers. Project workers provide support and information to MSM and gay men using beats in the Sydney area and liaise with health workers and police dealing with beats.
- The Asian Project conducted a training session to incorporate the use of volunteers in running the project's various support groups. Like many ACON projects, the Asian Project relies greatly on the work of volunteers to continue its work effectively. A program was implemented to provide ongoing professional supervision for ACON counsellors. The program is monitored regularly to ensure that the supervision needs of the counsellors are appropriately met.

Conferences and Workshops

- The annual ASHM (Australian Society of HIV Medicine) Conference was held in Sydney, with several ACON project workers in attendance. Following information on MAC prophylaxis presented at the conference, the HIV Support Project approached the ACON executive to successfully lobby for Rifabutin to become available in Sydney.
- Over 20 men from rural NSW attended a Peer Education Training Workshop conducted by the Rural Project in Sydney. The PET workshops assist in developing networks among gay men in country areas and trains participants to undertake social activities in their regions.
- The Women and AIDS Project took part in a Sexuality and Development Conference conducted by the University of Sydney.

Branches

- A six week outreach project conducted jointly by ACON Mid-North Coast and the Sex Workers Outreach Project (SWOP) reached sex industry workers in the Coffs Harbour region.
- ACON Hunter volunteers, staff and CSN carers participated in the creation of an AIDS Memorial Garden in the grounds of Newcastle's John Hunter Hospital.
- The last of a series of workshops were held for the Hunter HIV community for designing and creating panels for the National Quilt Project. The workshops were part of an ongoing support project by CSN Hunter for people experiencing loss and grief through HIV/AIDS.

- ACON Illawarra held a successful Melbourne Cup Day barbecue for people living with HIV/AIDS at the Jamberoo Hotel. Out Now, the Illawarra Branch's young gay men's group, took part in a Thank You Party for HIV educators which was held by the region's HIV Prevention Service.
- In an effort to target people in rural areas, the Hunter Branch conducted a series of street displays to raise awareness of the services available to people living with or affected by HIV/AIDS. Towns visited by the display included Maitland, Cessnock and Singleton.

Media

- "Fucking Without Condoms", a media insert included in the *Sydney Star Observer*, heralded a major change in ACON's approach to safe sex education directed towards gay men. The insert moved away from the "safe sex every time" message which had predominated since the 1980s and for the first time discussed the issue of negotiated safety, an acknowledgment that many gay men choose not to use condoms with regular partners. The new education approach, the first of its kind in the world, created substantial controversy in the mainstream press, aroused interest in the international gay press and stimulated debate about the use of condoms in the Sydney gay community.

Sydney Office

After almost five years in the Goulburn Street premises and two years in the Oxford Street office, the AIDS Council moved to its new premises at 9 Commonwealth Street in Surry Hills. The new office encouraged more of a focus on client needs and services, something which had proved problematic in the old offices.



Art

- The exhibition *Don't Leave Me This Way: Art in the Age of AIDS* opened at the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra. Included in the exhibition were a number of ACON's education and support campaign posters from the past decade, as well as self portrait in latex, an ACON-sponsored costume created by Sydney artist Brenton Heath-Kerr.

• DECEMBER •

Project Activities

- As part of the new-look MATES Project, the Western Sydney Unit started a phone line offering information and support to men who have sex with other men.
- Over 200 volunteer carers attended the CSN Christmas Party held at Betty's Soup Kitchen, while a similar number of guests attended ACON's Saturnalia Party to be entertained by the glamorous Beverly's Cavalcade of Beauties. Both end-of-year celebrations provided an opportunity for the organisations to thank the committees, staff and countless carers and volunteers for the hard work achieved throughout 1994.
- The Rural Project conducted outreach on the NSW Far South Coast. The trip included meetings with health care workers in Narooma and extensive work at regional beats.
- ACON projects were involved in World AIDS Day activities, including Counteraid in the City and Parramatta. Positive Women spent the day at Mullawa Prison for a third consecutive year, where the Mullawa AIDS Committee had raised over \$1000.

Media

- Streetwise Comics interviewed GLIDUP clients to collect background information for a special issue on intravenous drug use.

Positive Women's Retreat

- Thirty HIV positive women and their families attended the third Positive Women retreat. The weekend was spent swimming, horse riding and planning for the Second National Conference of Positive Women. For the first time alternative therapists were available over the course of the weekend.

Branches

- World AIDS Day activities were undertaken by all ACON branches. In Wollongong, an ACON Illawarra stall set up at Wollongong Mall was well received by the public. The Hunter Branch coordinated several events, including a Quilt display (including a dedica-

tion of four new panels and the presentation of 13 panels from the Hunter HIV community), an AIDS memorial service, street displays in Newcastle and contributing articles for the local media. In Coffs Harbour, World AIDS Day saw the opening of a Memorial Garden for people who have died of HIV/AIDS related illnesses. ACON Northern Rivers sold Red Ribbons at stalls, schools and health agencies located throughout the Branch's region. Interviews with HIV positive people in the local press proved to be effective in raising HIV related issues in the Northern Rivers region.

- The Northern Rivers Branch held its annual general meeting, electing a new 20-member advisory board.
- A working party was formed between ACON Illawarra and local lesbian and gay community groups to produce an Illawarra float for the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras.
- Both houses run by ACON Northern Rivers were occupied. The housing scheme assists clients needing short-term accommodation.
- Twenty participants completed an eight week training course to provide information and community education on HIV and homophobia conducted by the Northern Rivers Branch.
- ACON and CSN Hunter relocated to its new premises at 13-15 Watt Street in Newcastle.

• JANUARY •

Policy

- Following years of lobbying by ACON and other groups, compulsory HIV testing in NSW prisons was stopped, replaced with a voluntary scheme. ACON has always argued that not only was compulsory testing an unnecessary intrusion on prisoners' rights, it was also a waste of scarce dollars. Participating in the framing of the new policy, the Council advocated that prisoners were entitled to appropriate information to allow them to decide for themselves whether or not to be tested.
- As part of the ACON Strategic Plan, a full-scale review of the organisation's Gay Men's Education Strategy began, the first since 1987. The new strategy is to due to be finished by September 1995.

Salary Packaging

- Salary packaging for senior positions in ACON was introduced. The new system enabled the organisation to offer comparable market rates within funding limits and saving around \$190,000 per annum.

Project Activities

- The Women Partners' of Bisexual Men and Women and AIDS Projects began work on a "Trust" campaign. Entitled *So when do we stop using condoms?*, the set of leaflets and posters will discuss issues of sexual behaviour for women having sex with men. The campaign is due to be launched in September 1995, with the new resource to be distributed throughout NSW.
- GLIDUP commenced a series of network meetings with the NSW Users and AIDS Association (NUAA) to discuss injecting drug issues.
- A commuter vehicle with special modifications was purchased by Tiffy's Transport. The modifications included a fold down step and hand rails which greatly assisted HIV positive people with mobility difficulties.

Branches

- The Hunter Branch implemented its 1995/96 Hunter HIV/AIDS Awareness Campaign. Target groups included gay men, gay men coming out, other homosexually active men and people living with HIV/AIDS and their partners. As part of the campaign, the Hunter Outreach Project widened its service provision to include male and female sex workers. Additionally, other health service providers accessed by the target groups were provided with information regarding issues such as discrimination, HIV sensitivity and privacy.
- The first drop-in groups and peer education workshops for 1995 were held at ACON Hunter. Open to all ages, the participation rate increased in the new year over 1994 from an average of 14 to an average of 25 each group.
- A training and development visit to Melbourne over the Australia Day long weekend was conducted by all ACON/CSN Hunter project staff. The successful training included a visit to the Victorian AIDS Council to meet counselling and education staff, the Positive Living Centre and the opening of the new National Quilt Project workshops at Fairfield Hospital.



- Police in the Lismore district were provided with training by ACON Northern Rivers. The workshops covered homophobia, the role of ACON and the role of the gay and lesbian police consultative committee. Further training needs specifically on HIV issues were also identified from the training.
- ACON Illawarra formed "The Club", a support group for HIV positive people in the Illawarra region.
- The Mid-North Coast Branch launched a "coasters" campaign in local hotels and clubs. The drink coasters encouraged condom usage and HIV testing.

Media

- Treatment access once again became a major focus after a period of dormancy, following controversy over the Federal Health Minister's failure to approve the drug Rifabutin for release in Australia before she went on holidays. ACON, AFAO and PLWHA groups moved quickly with an effective media campaign and emergency public meeting criticising Dr Lawrence, who interrupted her holiday to approve the drug. As a result of the Rifabutin activity, ACON's Treatments Working Group was revitalised and played a leading role in a series of treatment issues over the next few months.
- GLIDUP project workers were interviewed on 2SER's Gaywaves program about the Project's Needlefest. Held in February, Needlefest was a forum for users focusing on safe injecting rituals and peer education.
- ACON's Por la Vida counsellor was interviewed in Spanish on Radio Austral and SBS about HIV/AIDS related issues for Spanish Australians.
- An innovative series of three advertisements were placed in gay community newspapers promoting the Speak Easy Project and asking for volunteers to help conduct outreach.

New Resources

- The second stage of the Myths campaign was launched by Paul O'Grady MLC. As with the cartoons launched in August 1994, the three new posters by artist Andrew Thomas Clark addressed common myths related to HIV/AIDS. The posters were colourful computer stylised images featuring well known Sydney gay community identities.
- Por la Vida distributed over 2000 1995 calendars, condom packs and promotional cards throughout the Spanish speaking community, including businesses, clubs and medical centres. Several national day celebrations were also targeted.

• FEBRUARY •

Branches

- Following the model of the Sydney Fun and Esteem Project, ACON Northern Rivers set up a support group for young gay men under 26. Two Jobskill trainees were employed to establish the project, with the assistance of the Sydney-based project.
- Monthly police gay and lesbian liaison meetings were established in Coffs Harbour. The meetings aimed to improve relationships between the two parties.
- Safe Sex Sluts from the Illawarra Branch stormed local venues in the weeks before Mardi Gras, handing out condoms and providing safe sex information. Out Now, the Illawarra young gay men's group, provided entertainment at an alternate Mardi Gras celebration.
- As part of a reciprocal orientation program, the Hunter Branch met with Aboriginal health workers from the Hunter and northern regions of NSW. ACON Hunter's participation, arranged through the Area Health Services HIV/AIDS Coordinator, raised issues around aboriginal people living with HIV/AIDS, home support and care, support and service for lesbian and gay kooris and improving access to services.
- A sex worker outreach project was funded in a partnership between the Northern Rivers Branch, the Sex Workers Outreach Project in Sydney and Public Health Northern Rivers. A worker was appointed to conduct a needs assessment, contact sex workers in the Northern Rivers region and assisting them to contact local worker-friendly health services.
- ACON and CSN Illawarra produced the first edition of its combined newsletter The Beacon, which provided HIV and lesbian and gay news and information for the Illawarra community.
- Over 100 people from more than 30 community organisations attended the official opening of the new ACON/CSN Hunter premises and rededication of its services. The event notably increased the profile of the Branch, received excellent feedback from guests and enhanced and initiated networking with other organisations.
- ACON Mid-North Coast received funding for a fixed term Care and Support Coordination Project to determine the support needs of people living with HIV/AIDS in the Coffs Harbour region. ACON Hunter participated in Newcastle University's orientation week at the invitation of the gay and lesbian group on the campus. A series of "courtyard" addresses and displays were held by the Branch, with over 1200 stu-



dents talking to staff and volunteers on the stalls.

Sydney Office

- NSW Premier, Mr John Fahey, officially opened the new ACON premises at 9 Commonwealth Street. At the launch Mr Fahey praised the work of the Council and the response to the epidemic by the gay and lesbian community, but refused to commit his government to reforms of euthanasia and gay relationships.



Superannuation

- HESTA, the superannuation fund covering AIDS council employees around Australia, announced that new HIV positive staff would not be entitled to disability and death cover insurance. The sudden announcement caught ACON and AFAO by surprise and caused concern that it would impede AIDS councils' ability to attract HIV positive staff to positions. Negotiations to find a solution to the impasse are continuing.

Project Activities

- In the week prior to the Mardi Gras parade and party, Safe Sex Sluts distributed over 4000 safe packs to people in Sydney's busy lesbian and gay venues. The Rural Project also had a busy lead up to Mardi

Gras with organising media publicity for the involvement of rural groups in the parade, and conducting a social event for rural lesbians and gay men coming to Sydney.

- ACON volunteers and staff took part in a range of Mardi Gras events, including the ever popular Fair Day, where ACON's Safe Sex Zone stall won "Best Stall" at the Mardi Gras awards in May. The Women's Project, Positive Women and the Fun and Esteem Project also organised Fair Day stalls. GLIDUP held a two day Needlefest, a forum for lesbian and gay injecting drug users.
- With the increasing number of new resources and articles coming into the Library each month, a regular "What's New" list is circulated on the e-mail system in the Sydney office, with hard copies being sent to all branches.
- GLIDUP outreach workers commenced a three-month program visiting gay and lesbian venues on Oxford Street to determine the extent people were injecting in the venues, where they were getting their syringes from and where they were disposing them. With the information gleaned from this exercise, the Project aimed to provide a more focussed service.
- In conjunction with staff from the HIV Support Project, the Rural Project conducted an outreach trip to Goulburn, Wagga Wagga and Griffith.
- The Annual Campaign launched its Sydney Safe Sex Zone campaign. The new campaign targeted withdrawal (pulling out before cumming) as an unsafe sex practice and the affects of drugs and alcohol on safe sex behaviour. T-shirts, stickers, posters and ads in the local gay press were all included in the campaign. The model used in the poster, Paul Yaeger, went on to be a finalist in Australian Women's Forum Man of the Year contest after been spotted in the ACON poster!

- The Women's HIV Support Project, in association with CLASH (Collective Lobby for HIV/AIDS Support for Heterosexuals), held a Harbour Cruise for positive women, CLASH members and their children.
- Client accessibility to the Counselling Service was improved with a revision of the appointment system. A new client booking schedule was designed and implemented in conjunction with the Client Liaison Team to accommodate the need for urgent appointments and to ensure a counsellor was available for "walk-in" clients. Following client feedback, counselling appointments were made available outside working hours, in the evenings and on Saturdays.

Conferences and Workshops

- Sixteen volunteers attended the pilot Speak Easy Volunteer Training Course. The intensive three-night course focused on HIV/AIDS issues, communication skills and community development. After completing their training, the volunteers proved a valuable asset to the Project, visiting gay community venues with safe sex information and ACON resources.
- The Second National Conference of Positive Women was held in Lane Cove, Sydney. ACON's Women's Team was instrumental in organising the Conference, including assisting with transportation for 74 participants and their children, juggling media, child care and support care for conference attendees. The formation of a National Network of Positive Women resulted from the three day conference.

New Resources

- The Parramatta office began focus testing of early drafts of a pamphlet for beat users from non-English speaking background or with low literacy skills. The new resource will provide basic material about safe sex and where to obtain further information. A new sticker and advertisement aimed at men who have sex with men was also produced by the Outreach Education Project.



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- The Lizard Lounge cocktail bar was the venue for the launch of the *Lesbian Sex Booklet*, an information resource for women who have sex with women. The booklet was the first comprehensive lesbian resource in ten years of the epidemic and proved to be immensely popular, with 12,000 copies already distributed locally, nationally and internationally and a second print run in progress. It also received plenty of media attention, particularly among conservative commentators who claimed it was an outrageous waste of money.
- *Frontline*, ACON's quarterly news publication, was revived after a four year hiatus. The new information resource promotes a range of activities and initiatives undertaken across the organisation and provides an important information conduit for its members.

ACON 10th Anniversary

- ACON marked its 10th anniversary with the publication of *Strengthening the Community: ACON and the HIV Epidemic in NSW*, a booklet highlighting key events in the history of the HIV epidemic in NSW and Australia. The booklet is one of the few resources which charts the community and political response to HIV/AIDS.

Fundraising

- Over \$1000 was raised following an art auction at TAP Gallery of work by local painter John Douglas. The proceeds of the auction went to the Community Support Network.

• MARCH •

Mardi Gras

- The month of March started with the Mardi Gras Parade and Party. To mark 10 years of providing care, preventative education and support, ACON and Mardi Gras joined together to create the "10 Years On, Still

Fighting AIDS" float for the Parade. Over 100 people participated in the float, which consisted of a one mile high spotlight beam travelling up Oxford Street with participants dressed in red surrounding it, playing instruments and dancing. The theme was both a remembrance of people who have died from AIDS related illnesses and an acknowledgment of ACON's work over the past ten years. The Women's Team and Positive Women also entered the Parade with the entry of two glamorous cadillacs, while over 100 carers marched in the parade behind the CSN banner. At the Party, GLIDUP volunteers and staff ran the now-established Information Stall and Needle Exchange. The Venues Liaison Project was busy ensuring both the Showgrounds and recovery venues were well stocked with condoms, dams and HIV information, while the Safe Sex Sluts handed out a record 20,000 safe packs and 5000 dam packs.

NSW Election Campaign

- With the NSW State election being held at the end of the month, ACON sent letters to key candidates to ascertain where they stood on 11 key HIV/AIDS issues. The results were published in the Sydney Star Observer to let the community know the position of the parties in these areas. The strategy proved successful as it committed politicians to a written policy position.

Media

- "The Rural Reality", an article in the *Sydney Morning Herald* about the issues facing lesbians and gay men in rural NSW, prominently featured the Rural project and its work. The important profile was one of the few mainstream press features on the unique experiences of the rural gay community.

Project Activities

- The first meeting of the new Venue Owners Working Group took place. The quarterly meetings provided gay community venue owners the opportunity to increase their input into ACON's education and outreach strategies.
- ACON's library service was advertised in *Talkabout*, increasing its profile amongst HIV positive service users.
- The Rural Project was involved in the Sydney Lesbian and Gay Roadshow at Parramatta and Newcastle. The Roadshow is a collaboration of government and community based organisations established by the Anti-Discrimination Board in 1994. It aims to strengthen lesbian, gay, transgender and HIV/AIDS networks throughout NSW and to foster closer relationships between city-based groups, services and service providers and those in regional areas. The Rural Project also collaborated with the western



NSW Regional AIDS Coordinator on a submission to organise a rural HIV/AIDS conference.

- The Women's Team and GLIDUP were involved in International Women's Day, with HIV positive women participating in the annual march.
- CSN's computer roster program was greatly improved, enhancing flexibility and ease of access to client files.
- Two additional properties were added to the Housing Project's register, increasing the number of medium term houses administered by ACON to seven.
- An extensive review of Tiffy's Transport was undertaken to determine how the service operated. The review recommended the use of taxi transport as a preferred option to the Tiffy's vehicles - clients would be given a PIN number they quote when calling cabs for visits to hospitals, HIV services, GPs and the PLWHA Luncheon Club - allowing greater access and flexibility. The number of vehicles used by the Transport Service was reduced to one as a result of this recommendation, with the employment of two drivers. A second recommendation from the report was the merging of Tiffy's with CSN, thereby enhancing client services.



New Resources

- Three full coloured postcards were produced by the Asian Project promoting its social and support groups, Asian gay pride and visibility, safe sex and a sense of belonging to a community. The postcards were distributed to gay venues and service providers in NSW, interstate and overseas.
- The Women Partners of Bisexual Men Project commenced work on a training package for health care workers on the issues relevant to women partners and men who have sex with men. The package included a booklet and video, with the video developed with the assistance of producers from the ABC program *GP*.
- The Counselling Team developed a pamphlet following an increase in the number of clients accessing the service. The pamphlet is to be distributed to medical practitioners, clinics and relevant agencies by the end of 1995.

Branches

- ACON Illawarra set up a working group to provide sexual health education to GPs in the Branch's area. The new initiative aimed to assist doctors become more aware and sensitive when dealing with issues of sex, sexuality and HIV/AIDS.
- ACON Northern Rivers provided training to staff of Lismore City Council Parks and Gardens in conjunction with local needle exchange services. The workshops covered values and attitudes, as well as worker safety and information on HIV transmission.
- Outreach services to the Murwillumbah-Tweed district were started by the Northern Rivers Branch. Staff are available in the local community at a designated time, providing support, running a vitamin and nutritional supplement service, assisting clients access the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation and providing HIV/AIDS information.
- The Illawarra Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras float was a very successful community development project, bringing new faces to ACON/CSN Illawarra and uniting many groups and individuals from the Wollongong region.
- A HIV Community Development Needs Assessment began in the Illawarra Branch. The assessment aimed to identify the services HIV positive people required in the Wollongong region and which of these services ACON Illawarra could provide.
- Arrangements for community groups to access ACON Hunter premises were formalised. Services and groups using the resources of the Branch include the Gay and Lesbian Information Support Serv-

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ice, Hunter Lesbian and Gay Interagency, Hunter Area Sexual Health Clinic, Sex Workers Outreach Project, Lesbian Support Group and the Newcastle University Gay and Lesbian Association.

- More than 70 people attended a successful lunch at the Lismore Club held by ACON Northern Rivers. The lunch promoted the Branch's activities in the local community.

Conferences and Workshops

- The Seventh Global Network of HIV Positive People Conference was held in Capetown, South Africa, with HIV positive staff from ACON participating in the get together. HIV Support workers addressed the Conference on HIV positive sexuality issues, while Vivienne Munro of the Women's HIV Support Project was re-elected as a key contact for the Asia-Pacific region at the Pre-Conference of International Community of Women.

• APRIL •

Project Activities

- Following a significant increase in requests from universities and colleges for student placements, the Counselling Team recognised the need for a policy regarding the recruitment, orientation and supervision of such placements. Alex Sosnov, a social worker who had previously spent a period of time on a student placement with ACON, was employed as one of three part-time counsellors, reflecting the successful use of the scheme.
- The Western Sydney Unit started an on-going support group for non-gay identifying men who have sex with men. The group provides peer support and an opportunity for men to share experiences and regularly attracts an average of 15 participants each meeting.
- The Rural Project conducted extensive outreach trips to the Mid-North Coast, Northern Rivers and New England, as well as participating in Gay and Lesbian Esteem workshops conducted in Dubbo and Mudgee. The outreach trips included liaison with people with HIV/AIDS, gay and lesbian groups and health care workers.
- A Parramatta branch of PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) was also established by the Fun and Esteem Project in Western Sydney, promoting support for relatives of young lesbians and gays in the outerwest metropolitan area.
- The ACON Library took on a student placement, allowing it to create a database of periodical titles and

update its lists for GRATIS, the health libraries network.

- Yum Cha, a peer support group for HIV positive Asians, conducted a weekend retreat for participants. The conference explored cultural and spiritual issues related to HIV/AIDS.
- The Annual Campaign was restructured and renamed Campaign Planning. No longer focusing on one large annual project, its new brief was to run a series of campaigns throughout the year, targeting high priority issues.



Fundraising

- The fifth Icons for ACON fundraiser, a tribute to Barbie, raised over \$1000 for the ACON Vitamin and Nutritional Supplement Service. A number of fundraising events such as the successful Icon series made it possible for the Service to subsidise HIV positive people on social security benefits when purchasing some of the more expensive products available.

Conferences and Workshops

- The Regional Director of the Department of Housing, Jennifer Wastacott, met with service providers and people with HIV/AIDS in the first HIV/AIDS Housing Forum. The meeting provided an opportunity to discuss accommodation issues of relevance to HIV positive people.
- The Western Sydney Fun and Esteem Project took part in a conference on homophobia in the Blue Mountains, which included issues related to lesbian and gay youth.
- Two forums were held by the Asian Project which aimed to identify contemporary issues confronting the gay Asian community. These included racism and internalised racism; the need for more outreach to people experiencing difficulties with the English language; self-esteem; and how Asian gay men are

perceived in the wider gay community. The first forum identified these issues, while the second provided participants with an opportunity to suggest projects and ideas which would address the issues.

Branches

- ACON Mid-North Coast conducted a comprehensive training program on HIV transmission and lesbian and gay issues for telephone counsellors of Coffs Harbour Lifeline. The training provided an opportunity for the counsellors to learn about the specific problems they may encounter when working in these areas.
- ACON Illawarra held its annual general meeting, with regional members voting for the largest advisory committee in the Branch's history. The Branch also combined the outreach and education positions into the one MSM/Gay Community Development Project. The new project has been conducting a needs assessment of the Illawarra lesbian and gay community and documenting a comprehensive resource listing for the Branch.
- Local HIV positive people and CSN/ACON Illawarra attended the Area Health Consumer Participation Forum.
- CSN Illawarra established a local chapter of the Quilt Project.
- A register of user friendly complementary therapists in the Northern Rivers area, accessible to clients, was developed by a volunteer with ACON Northern Rivers.
- The Northern Rivers Branch conducted outreach in the Casino region, contacting local agencies to provide them with information about ACON and gathering feedback as to how ACON can most appropriately deliver services.
- The Gay and Lesbian Roadshow travelled to the Northern Rivers, where over 100 people attended workshops and social events providing a high profile for lesbians and gays in the region.
- ACON Northern Rivers trained over 20 volunteers for its buddy program. The participants of the program provide emotional and practical support to people living with HIV/AIDS.
- A HIV Orientation Weekend was held by ACON Northern Rivers to provide education and information to the general community, and to recruit more volunteers to the Branch.

• MAY •

New Resources

- The first issue of *Barfly*, the Speak Easy Project's new publication, was distributed. Produced entirely by the volunteers, *Barfly* included articles which reflected Sydney's venue culture. Over 3000 copies were handed out at most inner city gay venues.
- A new S&M Dyke poster and fisting pack were launched by GLIDUP at the Leather Pride Fair. The new resources promoted safe behaviour for lesbians engaging in S&M activities.
- The Outreach Education Project produced the first issue of *Beats Project Live*, a resource which aims to provide regular updates and news about the work of the Project.
- A part-time coordinator was appointed to establish Screamline, a peer support telephone service for positive women around NSW. The Project was funded by the AIDS Trust of Australia and auspiced by ACON. Three openly HIV positive women were now working for ACON.



SCREAMLINE
1 800 630 075

Conferences and Workshops

- The CSN Coordinator addressed the Benevolent Society of NSW Volunteers Lunch as a keynote speaker, talking about the CSN module of volunteer caring and answering questions about HIV/AIDS.
- A number of ACON projects participated in the AFAO National Gay Educators Conference in Sydney. The Conference provided an opportunity for exchanging information and ideas with projects from other States.
- The 2010 Young Lesbians Group was addressed by GLIDUP in a workshop discussing safe injecting and safe sex.
- The Fun and Esteem Project revised the negotiated safety section of its Start Making Sense workshops, making it more relevant to recent changes in education strategies. The revised section has proved popular and informative for workshop participants.

- Vivienne Munro, Women's HIV Support Officer, was a representative of the Asia-Pacific region on the Strategic Planning Committee for the development of UN AIDS. The Committee meet in New Delhi, India.

Branches

- ACON Illawarra supported Wollongong University's AIDS Awareness Week with talks, resources and an information stall. As a result of ACON Illawarra's HIV Community Development Needs Assessment the Illawarra Positive Space Project was established. The new Project aimed to provide people with HIV/AIDS a venue where they could network with others who were HIV positive in a confidential, relaxed space.
- The CSN Illawarra Coordinator and a volunteer carer organised Wollongong's AIDS Candlelight Memorial. The event was well attended by a cross-section of the general community.
- A Gay, Lesbian & Queer Network was established in the Illawarra, including representation from ACON Illawarra.
- Care and Support volunteers with the Mid-North Coast Branch completed an intensive training program to provide people with HIV/AIDS in Kempsey and Port Macquarie with home based support.
- The 1995 AIDS Candlelight Vigil, sponsored by ACON/CSN Hunter, was held in Newcastle with a march from King Edward Park to Christ Church Cathedral. The vigil will now become an annual event with different venues selected each year on a rotational basis.
- ACON Hunter's Education Outreach Strategy was expanded to include outreach to gay identified and other homosexually active men in nightclubs and hotels, in addition to beat locations. Outreach conducted by the Branch relies greatly on a team of trained volunteers.
- Outreach services provided by ACON Northern Rivers were extended to the Byron Shire, where there was a great deal of enthusiasm for the development of a local drop-in space.
- A new drop-in space was created at ACON Northern Rivers and was launched with a lunch attended by over 30 people, including representatives from community agencies.
- Volunteer outreach workers gathered information from agencies in the Kyogle region to ascertain what services ACON Northern Rivers could offer.
- In association with the Queensland AIDS Council, the Northern Rivers Branch appointed a worker to liaise with MSM in the Tweed Valley-Gold Coast region.



Candlelight

- Over 12,000 people participated in the AIDS Candlelight Memorial held in Sydney. The annual event, which received widespread media coverage, provides an opportunity for the community to remember those who have been lost to us throughout the epidemic.

Project Activities

- Fourteen participants completed the ninth PET (Peer Education Training) workshop conducted by the Rural Project. The PET workshops train participants to work in social groups and develop networks among gay men and people with HIV/AIDS in rural areas.
- ACON ran a Sydney Safe Sex Zone stall at the annual Leather Pride Fair. GLIDUP also ran a popular stall featuring a reconditioned Harley Davidson motorbike emblazoned with safe injecting, sex and tattooing. ACON was also visible at the Inquisition Party which wrapped up Leather Pride Week with the Safe Sex Sluts distributing safe packs and GLIDUP running a needle and syringe exchange.
- The HIV Health Maintenance Education Officer, Stephen Gallagher, undertook a placement with four North American AIDS organisations to study their health maintenance programs and workshops.
- The Asian Project underwent a major change in the directions of its service delivery following a reassess-

ment of its priorities. A questionnaire was distributed to the Project's clients to determine their support and educational needs. Almost half the people surveyed had a primary interest in attending social activities outside existing venues, and a significant 34% considered the Project's workshops on issues such as sex and relationships beneficial. Almost half of the respondents saw the Project as a place they could obtain assistance for issues such as racism and coming out to their family.

- Through the NSW HIV/AIDS Library Network database, all ACON Library records were loaded onto the Commonwealth Health Department's CD-Rom database, *Healthrom*. The ACON Library specialises in education, social and psychosocial aspects of HIV/AIDS, policy, legal and treatment issues.
- A regular Friday drop-in for HIV positive clients was established in the Parramatta office. The drop-in aims to assist people with HIV/AIDS living in the Western Suburbs with their support and educational needs. The Western Sydney Unit also established a social committee for its Fun and Esteem Project, as well as a social group in Penrith.
- An extensive telephone survey was conducted by the Fun and Esteem Project to determine how, why and where young gay men were (or were not) accessing the service. The survey aimed to determine the effectiveness of current services and what new services are required by young gay men under 26. The results of the survey will be publicised in late 1995.
- Funding was secured for two family support workers based within the Women's Team. The Family Support Policy Officer, funded for one year, will be responsible for the implementation of a collaborative model of service provision for families affected by HIV. The second position, a Liaison Officer, will be responsible for recruiting, training and matching respite and foster carers and linking them with appropriate agencies.

Media

- The ACON Library was featured in "Mastering the Maze", a *National AIDS Bulletin* article on the NSW HIV/AIDS Library Network.

Superannuation

- Following HESTA Superannuation's refusal to cover new HIV positive employees, the AIDS Council and Endeavour Credit Union established a Disability Retirement Benefit Scheme. Through the scheme, people retiring for disability reasons would be provided with a bridging loan while they wait for their insurance payout to be approved.

Policy

- The Legal Working Group organised its annual forum for Law Week. In 1995 the forum was produced in conjunction with the Australian Drug Law Reform Foundation on "Drug Law Reform in the Age of AIDS". Held at the NSW Parliament, speakers examined possible law reform under the Carr Labor Government. A priority issue was the decriminalisation of cannabis use and possibly stronger drugs.
- ACON's extensive range of policies became more accessible to the public. Folders consolidating the organisation's major policies are not freely available from the Sydney office and all branches.



• JUNE •

Fundraising

- ACON's annual Hand in Hand Party at the Hordern Pavilion raised \$40,000. The event is the Council's major non-government fundraiser, with \$12,000 disbursed to a number of community organisations including BGF, Sanford House and the Illawarra Positive Space Project.

Project Activities

- The Women's HIV Support Project began outreach to Newcastle and Western Sydney on a regular basis, visiting drop-in groups and organising meetings.
- The Fun and Esteem Project issued a survey to school counsellors to determine how regularly they deal with gay students and the extent of homophobia in metropolitan Sydney high schools. The survey was followed up by an information pack on workshops dealing with homophobia and gay students.
- An agreement was reached with NSW police for guidelines on beats policing instruction. The agreement, the work of ACON Committee members and the Outreach Education Project, aimed to minimise

harassment of beat users through ensuring that police monitoring beat activity acted in an appropriate manner.

- The Women and AIDS Project received donations of prints from the National Gallery of Australia, Art Gallery of NSW and Museum of Contemporary Art. IKEA Furniture also donated \$3000 worth of office furniture to the Project, which has been used to furnish the meeting rooms in the Commonwealth Street office.
- GLIDUP's Positive Injectors Steering Committee planned the setting up of a support group for HIV positive lesbian and gay injecting drug users. The groups are to provide an opportunity for participants to network and obtain peer support. The first meeting of the newly formed Positive Injectors Groups took place at the end of the month.
- A revamped CSN Facilitator Training Course was conducted in Sydney, with attendance by volunteer carers from CSN Sydney and CSN Illawarra and NorthAIDS. In the same month CSN completed its 100th training course.

Policy

- With the successful and historical reformation of euthanasia law in the Northern Territory still prominent in the mainstream and gay media, ACON launched its Voluntary Euthanasia Bill following months of intense behind the scenes work. The aim of the ACON Bill was to provide an example framework for possible NSW Government legislation and also provided clear terms for the euthanasia debate. Since its launch, which attracted a great deal of media attention - the *Illawarra Mercury* went so far as to use the headline "AIDS Council pushes kill bill" - ACON has been promoting the Bill extensively in forums up and down the State and has attracted interest from the HIV community, other community groups, individuals, State politicians and health care professionals. An Euthanasia Resource Centre has also been established within the Sydney office for media and members of the public seeking information on the issue.

Affirmative Action

- A Steering Group was established to oversee the development and implementation of an Affirmative Action Program for Women, as required by law. The Program will examine workplace issues which affect women employees of ACON, who make up 47% of the total staff.
- ACON's Recruitment and Selection Policy and Procedures were extensively revised to reflect legislative and industrial changes. The new policy restates

ACON's commitment to external recruitment and transparent public processes.

Branches

- A care and support training course was conducted for volunteers in the Murwillumbah-Tweed area by the Northern Rivers branch. Ten people participated in the training, with six being placed as buddies for clients in the region.
- One of the houses rented by ACON Northern Rivers from the Department of Housing was converted to operate as a multi-purpose positive living centre for the Branch's clients. The direction of services to be provided by the new centre are determined by the clients themselves.
- The ACON Northern Rivers Advisory Committee, volunteers and staff held a successful planning day to determine the Branch's direction and setting priorities for the next six months.
- Speakers' Bureau training was conducted by the Northern Rivers Branch to develop a core of volunteers able to provide community information and respond to requests from community agencies.
- The Volunteer Team of the Hunter Branch ran the initial training for the development of a general team of volunteers and volunteer positions with specific job descriptions. The Volunteer Team has been responsible for the success of the Venue Outreach Program targeting gay and lesbian communities with safe sex messages, discrimination and privacy issues, positive health issues and awareness of available services.



- ACON Hunter sponsored four participants to the Have Your Say: Sexuality and Youth Forum 1995 held in Melbourne. The two males and two females represented a cross section of people involved in Hunter community groups and organisations. Feedback from the participants indicated that the Forum was a worthwhile and valuable information exchange.
- ACON Hunter staff attended training for a needle and syringe exchange outlet conducted by the Hunter Centre for Health Advancement. With the completion of the training, the Branch will be able to broaden its services to include an exchange program.
- Sixteen new carers were trained by the CSN Hunter Coordinators over an intensive two-weekend course. The efforts of these carers and the dedication of existing carers completing 12 months of service was recognised at a traditional "graduation dinner" on the final evening of the course.
- Two villas were purchased by ACON Mid-North Coast for short-term accommodation for people with HIV/AIDS, through the Department of Housing.
- The ACON Illawarra Outreach Project began work on a beats policy for volunteers and staff.

New Resources

- The Western Sydney Fun and Esteem Project established *Out West Extra*, a new publication for young gay men under 26 living in the Western Suburbs.
- The Speak Easy Project produced a series of erotic "cruise cards" for inner-city gay venues. The cards, which gay men can use to swap names and phone numbers, also serve a practical function by encouraging discussion and negotiation of sexuality and safe sex. Controversy caused by the production of simi-

lar cards in two other states was not repeated in NSW - 22,000 cards were taken from 12 venues in the first three weeks of their release!

Media

- The Women and AIDS Project contributed articles to the *National AIDS Bulletin* discussing HIV issues which most affect women.
- The recent refocussing of the Asian Project's work received attention from the gay press, with the *Sydney Star Observer* publishing an article on its services. The article highlighted the successful outreach work provided to the Asian gay community.
- GLIDUP contributed an article to *rural gaze*, the publication of ACON's Rural Project, which discussed injecting drug use in rural areas of NSW.

Conferences and Workshops

- The Rural Project successfully applied for funding for a Rural HIV/AIDS Conference. A part-time project officer will be employed to coordinate the organisation of the conference.
- The Asian Project held its first workshop on relationships running over three nights. The new workshop addressed specific cultural issues which affect Asian gay men in relationships, such as stereotyping, immigration, imbalances of power and communication problems arising from cultural difference as well as general safe sex and sexuality issues.
- The Housing Project presented a talk on housing issues for people with dementia at the AIDS Dementia Complex and HIV Related Psychiatric Conditions Education Program, held at Sacred Heart Hospice. CSN also presented a paper on home care for clients with dementia at the meeting.



GENERAL SNAPSHOT 1994-95

- Much of the work ACON projects and branches undertake is part of regular ongoing programs. In addition to the events and achievements listed in the chronology, an enormous amount of activity continues through caring for people with HIV/AIDS, assisting clients, running workshops and support groups, volunteer work and conducting outreach. Below is a snapshot of some of the remarkable energy that staff and volunteers have expended in the past 12 months helping ACON achieve its mission of bringing the AIDS crisis to an end. Special thanks must go to the countless volunteers who have helped the branches and projects undertake their work.

Counselling

- The Counselling Team undertook 1680 face-to-face sessions and took over 300 telephone counselling calls.

CSN

- CSN Sydney experienced a 39% increase in total care hours in the past 12 months and a 34% increase in shifts.
Direct care hours: 26,302 (18,887 for 93/93)
Number of shifts filled: 9699 (6367)
Number of clients cared for: 525 (490)
11 training courses were held, from which 140 new carers were added to CSN's volunteer base.

Fun and Esteem

- 17 Start Making Sense Workshops conducted by the Youth Peer Education Project with a total of 140 participants. 22 fortnightly drop-in groups with a total attendance of over 450 young gay men under 26. 103 requests for information from young men from Sydney, interstate and overseas. Over 985 volunteer hours contributed to the Project, primarily through workshop facilitation.

HIV Living

- 114 participants took part in 11 ten week HIV peer support groups. A further 22 participants attended two long term survivor groups which also ran for ten weeks. A HIV Peer Support Facilitator Training attracted 23 volunteers from Sydney, New England and the Illawarra. 312 people participated in 14 HIV Living Information Forums. 241 HIV positive people enjoyed two community-funded barbecues. 820 drop-in clients were assisted by the HIV Support Officers and the HIV Health Maintenance Education Officer. A further 27 home visits were also conducted.

Housing

- The month of May 1995 provides an idea of the

caseload the Housing Project deals with each month.
76 new phone enquiries
55 appointments
27 drop-in clients
24 tenants in seven ACON houses

Hunter Branch

- CSN Hunter averaged 1568 direct care hours each month over the past 12 months. In June, an incredible 2184 hours of care was provided to people with HIV/AIDS in the Hunter region.

Illawarra Branch

- CSN Illawarra has provided home care to over 70 people with HIV/AIDS and their significant others with 51 carers presently on its register.
In its busiest month, CSN Illawarra completed 125 shifts with only 39 carers. A total of 3674 hours of caring was achieved.
The Speakers' Bureau addressed over 3000 individuals on HIV/AIDS issues, ranging from school students to health professionals.
Over \$2000 worth of lubricant was sold to local sex worker businesses.
Out Now, ACON Illawarra's youth support project, has continued to thrive completely through the effort of dedicated volunteers.

Mature Aged Gay Men's Project

- 2000 attendances at the twice-monthly meetings
5000 newsletters were distributed to the Project's participants
1500 telephone enquiries were taken by the Project coordinator and volunteers
A recent survey has shown that 85% of MAG members consider it to be the most important support system in their lives.
Volunteer MAG participants continued to be actively involved in community work throughout the year, including Camp Goodtime, the Paediatric AIDS ward of Prince of Wales Hospital and PLWHA dinners at Heffron Hall.

Mid-North Coast Branch

- Four fundraisers netted over \$7500 for ACON Mid-North Coast. The branch is the busiest needle and syringe exchange outlet in the local Area Health region.

Resources and publications

- Tens of thousands of the following new publications and resources were distributed to ACON clients, members, volunteers and service users over the past 12 months.

• Western Sydney services poster and pamphlet
Asian Project postcards
The Beacon: ACON Illawarra's newsletter

Barfly

Beats Project Live

Choosing to Die: A booklet for people considering euthanasia and those asked to assist

CSN News

Doing It Ourselves: A guide to caring for people with HIV/AIDS

Frontline

Fun & Esteem News

Gay Men's Education Strategy

Lesbian Sex Booklet

MAG News

My Sex

"Myths" campaign postcards and posters

Outwest Extra

Por la Vida calenders and cards

Rural Gaze

Screamline poster

S&M Dyke posters

Silk Road Newsletter Speak Easy Cruise Cards

Strengthening the Community: ACON and the HIV Epidemic in NSW

Sydney Safe Sex Zone t-shirts, stickers and posters
Vicki Virus

Safe Sex Packs

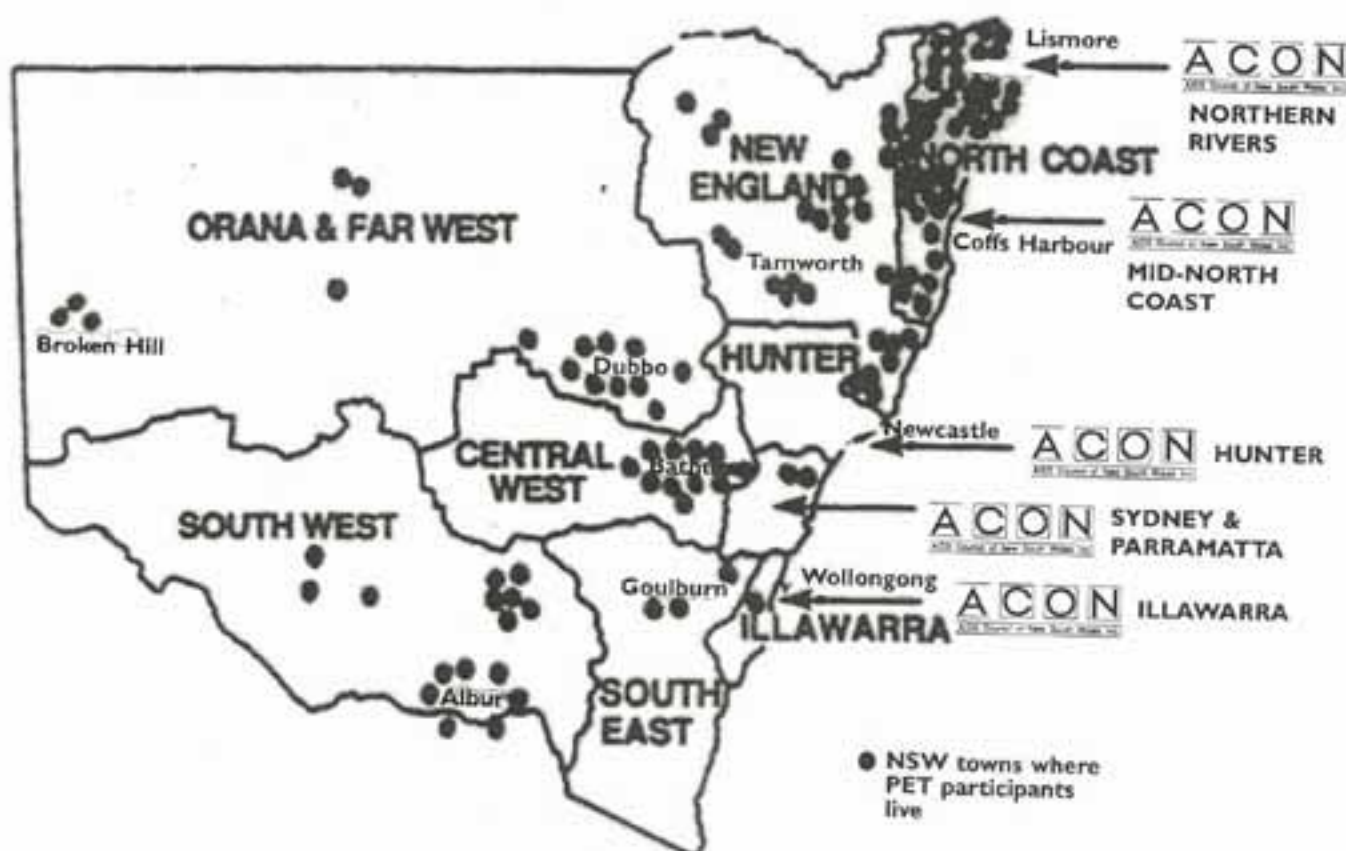
- Over 100,000 safe sex packs - which include condoms, lubricant and dental dams - were distributed in venues, special events and major dance parties in Sydney alone. Again, it was largely through the effort of large numbers of volunteers preparing the packs and handing them out that they were distributed.

Transport

- Tiffy's Transport made a total number of 3485 journeys throughout 1994/95. 3535 journeys were booked, 2083 of which were used.

Rural Project

- This map of NSW gives an indication of the areas the Rural Project has covered in providing support and education in rural areas.



TEN YEARS ON: ACON'S AND THE HIV EPIDEMIC NSW

In February 1985 the AIDS Council marked its 10th year as a community based organisation providing education, support, care and advocacy services to people with HIV/AIDS and a broad range of other service users.

A public meeting was called in 1985 to discuss how the Sydney gay community might mobilise and coordinate its response to the growing crisis. At that time there were 49 identified cases of AIDS in Australia. It was from this meeting that the AIDS Council of NSW was formed. Its first funding - \$14,500 from the Gay Mardi Gras Association (as it was then known) - was received in the same month.

ACON was formed by the establishment of a membership organisation (the Council) incorporating the AIDS Action Committee and the AIDS Learning Exchange and the affiliation with it of the other four community organisations already working on AIDS issues (Community Support Network; Bobby Goldsmith Foundation; the (then) Gay Counselling Service; and the AIDS Counselling Service (later to become Anka i).

ACON's growth

In the ten years of its existence, ACON has grown to become one of the largest non-government organisations in NSW. From March 1985, when it received its first government funding from the Commonwealth Government (\$74,000 for a coordinator and rent for a small office in Surry Hills), it now operates within an annual budget of approximately \$5.5 million, with offices in six locations around the State.

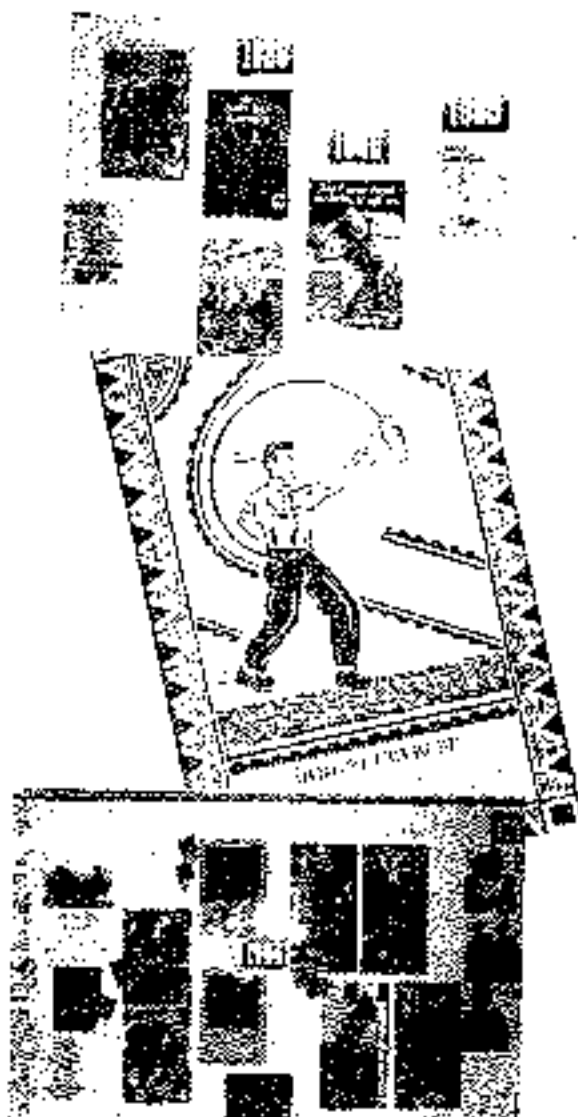
ACON's growth has reflected the speed with which the HIV/AIDS epidemic has grown in Australia. In addition to providing services specifically for people with HIV/AIDS and education and information for a broader audience, ACON has also played a pivotal role as one of the country's leading AIDS groups, both at the State and Federal level.

In May 1988 ACON opened its Hunter Branch in Newcastle, the first branch outside of metropolitan Sydney. The second branch, in Lismore, also commenced in 1988, followed by the Illawarra Branch in July 1989 and the Mid-North Coast Branch in July 1990. In late 1992 ACON Sydney opened an office in Blacktown, Western Sydney, which moved to Parramatta in November 1993. Across the State, ACON now employs around 120 staff (of these, about 51 are part-time positions) and involves more than 500 active volunteers at any one time. ACON also auspices the Sex Worker Outreach Project (SWOP) and operates the financial and personnel operations of P.W.H.A. (NSW) Inc.



STRENGTHENING THE COMMUNITY
ACON & the HIV epidemic in NSW

In February 1995 ACON produced Strengthening the Community: ACON and the HIV epidemic in NSW, the most comprehensive record of the history of the organisation to date.



ACON has produced a wide variety of posters in its ten year history.

Significant achievements

In all three areas of its work - lobbying, education and support - ACON can claim credit for some remarkable achievements. These include

Policy development and negotiating with governments:

ACON has played a persuasive role at both the State and Federal level, encouraging government to adopt constructive, community-focussed, non-discriminatory policies and adequate funding.

HIV Support:

Our HIV support program has been pivotal in building pride and providing visibility and a voice for people with HIV/AIDS. Through support groups, social events and information dissemination, HIV Support has assisted over 2000 people in coming to terms with their HIV status.

Campaigns for Sydney's gay community:

Since 1987 ACON has conducted major education campaigns to encourage Sydney's gay community to practise safe sex and maintain their health. Originally primarily aimed at HIV negative gay men, the campaigns changed accordingly as the HIV community became more open. Recently ACON launched the Gay Men's Education Strategy, which provided a clear set of objectives in educating the gay community and re-emphasised the organisation's commitment to its community.

Treatments advocacy:

Since AZT became available in the USA in 1986, ACON has been at the forefront of HIV treatments advocacy. Through public meetings, demonstrations and pressure on government, the Council has provided leadership in the HIV community for early access to drugs.

Services for women:

Apart from the three projects which specifically target the needs of women around HIV issues, as well as providing support for HIV positive women, other ACON services such as CSN, counselling and the Gay and Lesbian Injecting Drug Use Project have expanded their client base to become more inclusive of women's needs.

Supporting the HIV and gay and lesbian communities:

Recognising that self-esteem plays a crucial role in health maintenance for people with HIV, and encourages a strong lesbian and gay community, ACON has consistently fostered community development, sup-

ported legislative change and confronted discrimination where it exists. Through its projects and activities, ACON has also played a direct part in maintaining HIV and gay and lesbian pride.

Challenges

The very nature of the Australian HIV epidemic has meant that from its beginnings, ACON has operated under very volatile conditions. Apart from having to continually contend with (often very) conservative elements in the general community and in the political arena, the volunteers, staff and Committee of ACON must cope daily with the reality that many of our friends and supporters continue to get ill or are no longer with us. This alone makes working in the HIV/AIDS field a very difficult and challenging task.

The complex issues surrounding HIV/AIDS have changed enormously since 1985 and continue to do so. ACON has always attempted to foresee these changes and to plan for them. One way it has done this is through strategic planning. In 1993, ACON began planning a five year strategy (adopted in April 1994), which sets out strategic objectives for the next few years.

Input, feedback and criticism of ACON's work from within the affected communities has also influenced the organisation's efforts to bring the AIDS crisis to an end. There are many stakeholders with differing needs and views, ACON continues to meet as many as we can with resources stretched across a very wide range of programs and services. Often, very difficult decisions about priorities have to be made.

Looking to the future

When ACON was set up in 1985 the community did not expect it would need to last ten years. We hoped - and expected - solutions to be found within five years. Disappointing news on developments in treatments and vaccines means the epidemic will probably be with us for at least another ten years.

The community needs to remain mobilised and maintain confidence in our ability to end the crisis. It is vital that we maintain the key foundations of our response.

- community mobilisation
- full participation by people with HIV
- dedicated AIDS funding

These need to be cemented in government policy through the adoption of a Third National Strategy.

- Geoff Andrews & Don Baxter

COMMITTEES AND STAFF

Committee of Council

- **President:** Bruce Meagher
- **Vice-President:** Mark Hoskins
- **Secretary:** Annette Gunnis
- **Treasurer:** Peter Grogan

David Buchanan
John Gorwin
Andrew Hope
Tim Leach
Gunter Plum
Ravi Ravinder
Kathy Sant
Simon Watts

- **Ex-officios:** Don Baxter
Paul Kinder

• **PLWHA**

Representatives: Bill Higney
Chris Horden
Paul Tansley

• **CSN Representative:**

• **Gay & Lesbian Counselling**

Representative: Michael Nelson

• **BGF Representative:** Levisia Crooks

• **Volunteer Minute Taker:** Hermione Kidd

ACON Hunter Advisory Committee

- **Chairperson:** Wayne Baker
- **Secretary:** Grahame Davis
- **Treasurer:** Patricia McCarthy

Robert Bull
Tony Cashel
Steve Cody

• **CSN Representative:** George Quinn

• **MacKillop House
Representative:** Bill Hocking

ACON Illawarra Advisory Committee

- **Convenor:** Phillip Geaghan
- **Secretary:** Position vacant
- **Treasurer:** Vivienne Cunningham-Smith

Adam Jackson
Michael McLeod
Africa Taylor
David Warr
Ian Warrigo
Peter Waples

ACON Mid-North Coast Advisory Committee

- **Convenor:** Craig Galton
- **Secretary:** Stephen Pratt

Vicki Cooper
Nav Curtis
Troy Dunn
Paul Laugs
Lloyd Palmer
Victor Phillips
Ma2 Thompson

ACON Northern Rivers Advisory Committee

Kevin Hampton
Garry Bourke
Gail Bryson
Geoffrey Colwill
Joseph Dorman
Ian Gray
Kim Harrison
Stephen Haslop
Ross Lohman
Peter Mitchell
Jill Rhodes
Gary Schliemann
Robyn Singh
Marg Ward

Executive Unit

- **Executive Director:** Don Baxter
- **Deputy Director:** Paul Kinder
- Executive Secretary:** John Hardman

Care, Housing & Transport Unit

- **Manager:** Jim Belford

Operations and

Policy Coordinator: Tess Zerns

Volunteer and

Training Coordinator: Liz Yeo

Care Liaison Officers: Catherine McGettigan
Angelo Morelli
Barry Webb

Care Liaison Officer

(Transport Specialist): Monica Khouri

Care Liaison/

Support Officer: Michael Erwee

Housing Officers: Anna Landicho

Fred Oberg

Client Assistant Workers: Julie Callaghan

Diana Carr

Client Liaison and Information Unit

- **Manager:** David Edie

Senior Client

Liaison Officer: David Baglora

Client Liaison Officer: Nicola Addison
 Barrie Brockwell
 John Byrne
 Juliet Dewar
 Tegan Sadler
 Kon Tournazos
 Bill Watson
 Paul You d
 Librarian: Meryl Pannaci
 Library Assistant: Susan McGuckin
 Information Officer: Janet Jukes
 Information Assistant: Paul de Koning

HIV Strategy and Support Unit

• Manager: Peter McCallum
 HIV Health Maintenance
 Education Officer: Stephen Gallagher
 Talk Early
 Treatments Officer: Jaime Elliott-Svoronos
 Positive Youth
 Peer Support: Jaime Elliott-Svoronos
 HIV Support Officer: Scott Berry
 NSW Treatments Officer: Alan Strum
 HALO Solicitor: Car Hook
 Counsellors: Marcus Cohen
 Shelly Daniels
 Alex Sosnov
 Spanish Counsellor: Grant Farquharson
 Volunteer Counsellor: Steve Keith

Organisational Services Unit

• Manager: Kevin Golding
 Administrative
 Services Officer: Andrew Sajben
 Computer Systems
 Support Officer: Malcolm Griffith
 Human Resources
 Officers: Olympia Fountoulis
 Mark Gruber
 Tracy Wood
 Payroll Officer
 Staff and Volunteer
 Training Development
 Officer: Paul Hannan
 HIV Study Grant
 Training Coordinator: Valda Prano Sampson
 Staff & Volunteer
 Counsellor/Support Officer: Steve Keith
 Volunteer Coordinator: Barry Edwards
 Finance Officer: Allen Lee
 Finance Assistants: Geoff Dingney
 Penny Hill
 Layout and Graphic
 Design Officer: Dean Andrews

Peer Education Unit

• Manager: Aldo Spina
 Asian Project Officers: Kent Chuang
 Matthew Hua
 Steve Ostrow
 MAG Project Officer:
 Youth Peer Education
 Officer: Brad Gray
 Rural Project Officers: Nik Andronic
 Nigel Carrington

Policy and Women's Unit

• Manager: Faye Druett/
 Lisa Brockwell/
 Trent O'Keefe
 Media Liaison Officer:
 Policy Development
 Officer: Geoffrey Bloom
 Women's HIV Support
 Officers: Vivienne Munro
 Jacqueline Frajer
 Gloria Orillz
 Shan Short
 Women and AIDS Officers:
 Women Partners of
 Bisexual Men Project: Sara Lubowalz
 GLIDUP Project Officer: Robyn Maurice
 GLIDUP Outreach Worker: Sarah Bergin
 Culhanasia Project Officer: Paul van Ruyk

Sydney Gay Education Unit

• Manager: Brent Mackie
 Campaign
 Planning Officer: Richard Knight
 GLIDUP Outreach Worker: Tony McNaughton
 Venues Liaison Officer: Steven Hales
 Speak Easy
 Project Officer: Garry Fogl
 Sydney Gay Men's
 Project Officer: Steven Ford

Western Sydney Unit

• Manager: Daniel Madeddu
 Administration: Brooke Hill
 CSN Coordinators: Pat Kennedy
 Lesley Daniel
 Gerry Tobin
 Graham Norton
 Gerry Tobin
 Education Officer:
 HIV Drop-in Coordinator:
 Outreach Education Officer
 Coordinator: Philip Koen
 Outreach
 Education Officers: Glen Andersson
 Peter Kerans
 Jeff Union
 Neil Pnirschka
 Western Sydney Youth
 Peer Education Officer: Michael Donnelly
 Wentworth MSM
 Education Officer: Graham Norton
 David Novella

Hunter Branch

• **Manager:** Kevin Paton
Counsellor/Educator: Gail Mafflesoni
CSN Coordinators: Rosemary Bristow
Mary Anne Saunders
Field Education Officers: Wayne Cook
Bret Steel
Administrative Officer: Crellyn Collison

Hawarra Branch

• **Manager:** Jacqueline Braw
Administrative Officer: Tracy Simeon
MSM/Gay Community
Development Officer: David Webber
CSN Roster/Client
Services Coordinator: Thelma Todd
CSN Volunteer
Recruitment/Training
and Support Officer: Glen Barrington
HIV Community
Development Officer: Frank Vellozzi
Youth Peer Education
Officer: Adam Lawrence

Mid-North Coast Branch

• **Manager:** Angela O'Brien
Educator: Colin Court
Administrative Officer: Diane Robinson

Northern Rivers Branch

• **Manager:** Di Furniss
Administration Officers: Glenn King
Graeme Williams
Client Services
Coordinator: Sue Rodda
HIV Community Worker: Kathleen Cross-Nelson
Client Services Coordinator
HIV Community
Worker Relief: Geoffrey Colwill

AFFILIATE'S REPORT: BOBBY GOLDSMITH FOUNDATION

The Bobby Goldsmith Foundation has had an exciting year securing a property for its new supported housing project. Location of this property followed a most 12 months of searching for an appropriate sight. The project will provide ten self-contained one bedroom apartments for people with advanced HIV disease who need support to maximise their independence.

The project came about following a specific bequest to BGF of \$500,000 to be used to house people with AIDS. The NSW Department of Housing has more than matched this amount, and the Surry Hills property is about to be refurbished following the recent approval of our development application by South Sydney Council. The Department of Health has provided \$223,000 toward the refurbishment and the project, which brings the total budget to over \$2 million. Clients should be able to accommodate the apartments in 1990 and negotiation for ongoing financial support from the Department of Health is continuing.

BGF has continued to provide financial assistance to people with advanced HIV disease and is increasingly playing a role in supporting people living outside the Sydney metropolitan area. This support is provided directly and also through the ACON branches, where good working relationships are developing.

During the year ending December 1984, BGF provided over \$336,000 in financial support and maintains a large pool of household appliances and equipment which is provided on loan to our clients. The organisation entered into an affiliation with the PLWHA Luncheon Club in 1985 and provides administrative assistance to this important service.

Ian Malloy represented BGF on the ACON Committee throughout most of the year and was then replaced by Levinga Crooks, who convenes both the BGF Housing Client Services sub-committees, ACON, CSN, the Metropolitan Community Church, PLWHA (NSW) and a number of health care providers and community representatives sit on these sub-committees.

MY SEX



For Women with HIV and AIDS

*My Sex is the only Australian resource to discuss
sexuality issues for HIV positive women.*

TREASURER'S REPORT

Most of ACON's funds were again derived from grants from the NSW government and other bodies. Fundraising income increased during this financial year.

ACON's finances were dominated this year by the move to Commonwealth Street and our previous accommodation problems. For part of the year, we were still occupying two separate premises in Goulburn St and Oxford St. We were never fully funded for the Oxford St premises. The rental was beyond our budget and running two receptions also added to our costs. In moving out the makegood expenses on both properties were above what had been budgeted. We have been sued by the owner of Goulburn St, despite having spent \$113,000 on the makegood there. Hopefully that matter will be resolved shortly.

Commonwealth St itself is an enormous benefit to ACON because it guarantees security for the Sydney office for another nine years. Our grants income is far less secure than this and therefore in the long term the move makes the organisation much more secure financially.

We received specific grants which covered part of the renovation costs but we made a clear decision that Commonwealth St was important enough to the future that ACON would bear the difference between the fit-out cost and the grant.

Lastly, we now have to meet the running costs of the building ourselves. We have negotiated to receive part of our previous rental grant to cover these costs. We are confident that we can meet these costs which include a gradual upgrading of the air conditioning system. A total failure of that system would not be covered within our budget.

We have tried in the notes to give members a picture of the financial performance of the organisation separate to the Commonwealth St issue. In essence, our income is up but by a smaller amount than in previous years. We had some over-runs in specific areas but are confi-

dent we have addressed these by negotiating increased funding for some services and by implementing cost-saving strategies.

Our objective for 1995/6 is a surplus of \$50,000. Managers and staff are planning for this outcome.

The cash position at June 30 was \$54,660 as per note 3. This is somewhat misleading due to an outstanding grant of \$284,000 from the NSW Department of Health, which they had not paid because of confusion with the extra grants this year. That amount appears in the accounts as part of the receivables in note 4.

June 30 also represents one of our four periods of lowest cash reserves because in the following week our quarterly payment arrives.

The organisation remains in a strong financial position. The cash position has been reduced because of the Committee's decision to proceed with the move to Commonwealth St. There should be no financial problems in the foreseeable future but the situation does highlight the need for adherence to budgets in all areas of the organisation, despite demand for services which always outstrips our capacity to supply.

The write-off of the Commonwealth St fit out will continue to influence the balance sheet for the next five years because of the size of the investment.

Most of our income is recurrent from the State Government, although we are continuing to explore alternate sources such as contracts from area health services. Fundraised income has increased and we hope it will increase again. A fundraising strategy is being developed with the aim of increasing the independence of ACON and servicing non-funded areas.

Certain areas continue to have particular demands which outstrip budgets and we will need to continue to monitor these areas. I am pleased to recommend the accounts to members for acceptance.

• Peter Grogan

AUDITORS REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF AIDS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES INC.

I have audited the accounts for the year ended 30 June 1995 set out on pages numbered 44 to 54. The company's directors are responsible for the preparation and presentation of the accounts and the information they contain. I have conducted an independent audit of these accounts in order to express an opinion on them to the members of the company.

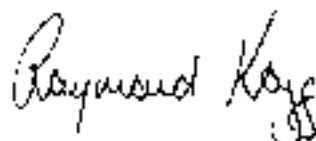
My audit has been conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance as to whether the accounts are free of material misstatement. My procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the accounts, and the evaluation of accounting policies and significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion as to whether, in all material respects, the financial statements are presented fairly in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and statutory requirements so as to present a view of the company which is consistent with my understanding of their financial position and the results of their operations and cash flows.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

Audit Opinion

In my opinion, the accounts of Aids Council of New South Wales Inc. are properly drawn up:

- (a) so as to give a true and fair view of:
 - (i) the state of affairs of the company at 30 June 1995 and of the results and cash flows of the company for the year ended on that date; and
 - (ii) the other matters required by Divisions 4, 4A & 4B of Part 3.6 of the Corporations Law to be dealt with in the accounts;
- (b) in accordance with the provisions of the Corporations Law; and
- (c) in accordance with all applicable Accounting Standards.



RAYMOND KAZZI, B.Ec CPA
Level 2
105 Burwood Road
CONCORD NSW 2137

Dated this 11th day of October 1995

AIDS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES INC.

*AIDS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES INC.
AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
AS AT 30 JUNE 1995*

*AIDS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES INC.
BALANCE SHEET AS AT 30 JUNE 1995*

	Notes	\$	1985 \$	1994 \$
CURRENT ASSETS				
Cash	3	54,650		719,320
Receivables	4	353,408		103,985
Inventories	5	18,531		9,827
Other	6	58,053		44,673
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS			493,662	877,805
NON CURRENT ASSETS				
Property Plant & Equipment	7	1,342,351		383,698
TOTAL NON CURRENT ASSETS			1,342,351	383,698
TOTAL ASSETS			1,836,013	1,261,503
CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Creditors and Borrowings	8	639,464		521,878
Other	9	252,241		292,162
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES			891,705	814,040
NON CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Creditors and Borrowings	10	92,261		111,836
TOTAL NON CURRENT LIABILITIES			92,261	111,836
TOTAL LIABILITIES			983,966	925,876
NET ASSETS			\$ 852,047	\$ 345,627
ACCUMULATED FUNDS				
Accumulated funds at beginning of year		345,627		330,564
Current Year Surplus/(Deficit)		506,420		15,063
TOTAL ACCUMULATED FUNDS			\$ 852,047	\$ 345,627

AIDS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES INC.

INCOME & EXPENDITURE STATEMENT YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 1995

	Notes	\$	1995 \$	1994 \$
INCOME				
Grants Received	11	5,872,949		6,074,824
Less: Grants Unexpended	9	252,241		232,582
			5,620,708	5,842,262
Add:				
Donations		124,509		151,800
Events and Activities/Fund Raising		207,775		221,752
Interest		51,040		49,355
Sales of Vitamins		90,733		83,258
Other	12	61,292		52,454
			535,351	558,619
TOTAL INCOME			6,156,059	6,400,881
EXPENDITURE				
Accommodation		668,119		797,052
Audit Fees	13	17,845		18,210
Board and Council		11,714		27,515
Cost of Goods Sold		83,567		78,502
Finance		33,470		43,292
Fund Raising		124,088		118,913
Office Supplies		209,593		209,306
Payroll	14	4,030,032		4,012,203
Postage, Freight and Telecommunications		207,662		232,782
Program, Resources and Client Services		474,387		359,039
Publicity and Promotion		155,881		177,772
Insurances and Professional Services		56,014		77,298
Travel and Representation		252,945		234,524
TOTAL EXPENDITURE			6,315,317	6,365,798
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) BEFORE EXTRAORDINARY ITEMS			(159,258)	15,083
EXTRAORDINARY ITEMS	2		565,678	-
NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) AFTER EXTRAORDINARY ITEMS			\$ 506,420	\$ 15,083

AIDS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES INC.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 1995

NOTE 1 - STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The accounts have been prepared in accordance with Statements of Accounting Concepts, applicable Accounting Standards and the applicable disclosure requirements of Schedule 6 of the Corporations Regulations, with the exceptions where noted:

(a) Basis of Preparation

The accounts have been prepared on an accrual basis and on the basis of historical costs and do not take into account changing money values or, except where stated, current valuations of non-current assets. The accounting policies have been consistently applied, unless otherwise stated.

(b) Depreciation

Depreciation is calculated on a straight line basis so as to write off the net cost of each depreciable non-current asset over its expected useful life.

(c) Fixed Assets

Fixed assets are included at cost or at independent valuation and are depreciated over the estimated useful lives commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. Only assets of substance and of material value have been capitalised and subject to depreciation.

(d) Accounts Receivable - Grants

The council prepares accounts on an accrual basis, therefore all funds to be committed for the financial year have been recorded as income for that year.

(e) Leases

Assets which are acquired under leases deemed to be "finance leases", that is, leases which effectively transfer from the lessor to the lessee substantially all the risks and benefits incident to the ownership of the leased assets, are capitalised as fixed assets.

Finance leases are capitalised by recording an initial asset and liability equal to the present value of the minimum lease payments including any guaranteed residual values. Leased assets are amortised over their expected useful lives using the straight line method. Lease payments are allocated between interest expense and lease liability.

Lease expenditure relating to leases deemed to be "operating leases" is expensed as incurred. Operating lease commitments outstanding at balance date include guaranteed residual values.

AIDS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES INC.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 1995

	1995	1994
	\$	\$

NOTE 2 - EXTRAORDINARY ITEMS

During the year ended 30 June 1995, the AIDS Council of NSW moved offices from Goulburn Street to Commonwealth Street, Surry Hills. The new offices required extensive renovations and a grant for the cost of renovations as well as the cost of moving was sought from NSW Health Department and was expended as follows:

Commonwealth Street Fit Out Grant	1,054,000	-
Depreciation on Fit Out	156,597	
Rent to Ray White on 1.12.94	22,842	
Make Good on Oxford Square Investment P/L on 31.1.95	28,105	
Rent to Ray White on 4.1.95	22,842	
Make Good on 168 Goulburn St to Quatro Interiors	67,028	
	<hr/>	
	297,414	
Consultancy Fee to Devonport Campbell on 27.09.94	90,908	
	<hr/>	
	908,322	-
	<hr/>	
	\$ 665,678	\$ -
	<hr/>	<hr/>

AIDS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES INC.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 1995

	1995 \$	1994 \$
CURRENT ASSETS		
NOTE 3 - CASH		
Cash at Bank:		
Commonwealth Bank		
Sydney	(48,946)	35,221
- Lismore (North Coast)	2,536	(4,720)
- Newcastle (Hunter)	1,137	(1,999)
- Coffs Harbour	10,031	1,214
- Illawarra	(1,372)	447
- Parramatta (Western Sydney)	177	(1,519)
	<u>(36,437)</u>	<u>28,644</u>
Cash on Deposit:		
Australian European Finance Corporation <i>(A subsidiary of the Commonwealth Bank)</i>	71,677	672,395
Commonwealth Bank	15,420	15,080
	<u>87,097</u>	<u>687,475</u>
Cash on Hand:		
Petty Cash	4,000	3,200
TOTAL CASH	<u>\$54,660</u>	<u>\$719,320</u>

NOTE 4 - RECEIVABLES

Government and Other Grants Committed		376,195
116,772		
less: Provision for Doubtful Debts	12,787	2,787
	<u>\$363,408</u>	<u>\$103,905</u>

NOTE 5 - INVENTORIES

Stock on Hand - at cost	\$19,531	\$9,627
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AIDS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES INC.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 1995

		1995 \$	1994 \$
CURRENT ASSETS			
NOTE 6 - OTHER			
Accrued Income	13,123		4,298
Prepaid Expenses	28,840		29,192
Deposits - Utilities	14,100		11,183
		<u>\$ 56,063</u>	<u>\$ 44,673</u>
NON CURRENT ASSETS			
NOTE 7 - PROPERTY, PLANT & EQUIPMENT			
1. Furniture & Fittings			
Furniture & Fittings - At cost	1,205,330		50,628
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	<u>178,686</u>		<u>29,009</u>
		<u>1,026,643</u>	<u>21,619</u>
2. Office Equipment			
Office Equipment - At cost	752,605		681,104
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	<u>454,694</u>		<u>329,482</u>
		<u>297,911</u>	<u>351,622</u>
3. Equipment Under Lease			
Equipment Under Lease - At cost	13,350		13,350
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	<u>5,563</u>		<u>2,899</u>
		<u>7,787</u>	<u>10,451</u>
4. Leasehold Improvements			
Leasehold Improvements - At cost	2,614		2,614
Less: Accumulated Depreciation	<u>2,614</u>		<u>2,614</u>
		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
TOTAL PROPERTY, PLANT & EQUIPMENT		<u>\$1,342,351</u>	<u>\$383,696</u>

AIDS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES INC.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 1995

	Note	1995 \$	1994 \$
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
NOTE 8 - CREDITORS AND BORROWINGS			
Trade Creditors		235,194	189,893
Accrued Expenses		6,580	21,302
Lease Liability	10	19,575	17,238
Provisions	15	378,105	293,445
		---	---
TOTAL CREDITORS AND BORROWINGS		\$639,464	\$521,878
		=====	=====

NOTE 9 - OTHER

UNEXPENDED GRANTS

Unexpended grants represent the total of grants unexpended at the end of the period. The balance of these grants will be carried forward to the next period when the relevant expenses can then be properly matched to the period in which they are incurred.

Grants are as follows:

NSW Department of Health	141,352	\$1,155
Commonwealth Grants including Department of Human Services and Health	2,994	33,149
Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations Inc.	17,651	17,358
AIDS Trust of Australia	22,571	61,949
NSW Department of Community Services (SAAP)	-	-
Area Health Service	45,143	7,885
Other Grants	22,530	61,066
	-----	-----
TOTAL OF COMMITTED BUT UNEXPENDED GRANTS RECEIVED	252,241	232,562
	-----	-----
ADD: Grants in Advance	-	49,600
	-----	-----
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES - OTHER	\$252,241	\$282,162
	=====	=====

AIDS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES INC.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 1995

	Note	1995 \$	1994 \$
NON CURRENT LIABILITIES			
NOTE 10 - CREDITORS AND BORROWINGS			
Finance Leases			
Finance Leases capitalised and included in Plant and Equipment (Note 7)			
Lease Commitments			
- Not later than one year		32,132	32,132
- Later than one year but not later than two years		31,463	32,132
- Later than two years but not later than five years		83,293	89,041
- Later than five years		-	25,081
Minimum Lease Payments		146,888	178,386
Deduct Future Finance Charges		35,052	49,312
TOTAL LEASE LIABILITY		111,836	129,074
LESS CURRENT LIABILITY	8	19,575	17,208
NON CURRENT LIABILITY		\$92,261	\$111,836

NOTE 11 - GRANTS RECEIVED

NSW Department of Health	6,403,155	5,149,328
Federal Government	88,290	123,970
Australian Federation of Aids Organisation Inc.	24,308	429,197
AIDS Trust of Australia	84,769	101,799
Area Health Service	124,772	61,153
NSW Department of Community Services (SAAP)	70,146	78,771
Australia Council	6,820	-
Others	104,889	132,608
	6,926,949	6,074,824
Less: Extraordinary Items	2	1,054,000
	\$5,872,949	\$6,074,824

AIDS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES INC.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 1995

	Note	1995	1994
		\$	\$
NOTE 12 - OTHER INCOME			
Rental Income		14,811	13,418
Buyer's Club		-	348
Consultancy Services		-	2,645
Sales of Materials		18,270	29,317
Membership Fees		5,459	4,452
Staff Social Club Fees		1,240	2,274
Wages Reimbursed		21,512	-
		<u>\$61,292</u>	<u>\$52,454</u>

NOTE 13 - AUDITORS REMUNERATION

Amounts received, or due and receivable
by the Auditor for:

Auditing the main and project accounts of AIDS Council of New South Wales Inc.	17,095	17,330
Other Accounting Services	750	880
	<u>\$17,845</u>	<u>\$18,210</u>

NOTE 14 - PAYROLL

Wages and wage-related expenses	3,831,951	3,835,684
Superannuation	168,081	175,519
	<u>\$4,000,032</u>	<u>\$4,012,203</u>

NOTE 15 - PROVISIONS

Annual Leave	261,144	201,752
Leave Loading	38,894	30,295
Long Service Leave	63,617	46,441
Workers Compensation	14,450	12,520
Sick Leave	-	2,437
	<u>\$378,105</u>	<u>\$293,445</u>

AIDS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES INC.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 1995

	Notes	1995 \$	1994 \$
NOTE 16 - STATEMENT OF CASHFLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 1995			
Cash flows from operating activities:			
Receipts from customers & granting bodies		6,860,675	6,354,527
Payments to suppliers & employees		(6,261,215)	(6,412,756)
Interest received		51,040	49,355
Interest and other costs of finance paid		(5,529)	(4,497)
Net cash from operating activities	2	<u>633,971</u>	<u>(13,371)</u>
Cash flows from investing activities:			
Payments for building renovations, furniture & fittings, and plant & equipment acquired		(1,266,499)	(184,574)
Proceeds for plant & equipment sold		-	21,087
Net cash from investing activities		<u>(1,266,499)</u>	<u>(163,477)</u>
Cash flows from financing activities:			
Payments reducing lease liability		(32,132)	(31,407)
Net cash from financing activities		<u>(32,132)</u>	<u>(31,407)</u>
Net increase in cash held		(664,660)	(208,255)
Cash at the beginning of the year		719,320	927,575
Cash at the end of the year		<u>\$ 54,660</u>	<u>\$ 719,320</u>

AIDS COUNCIL OF NEW SOUTH WALES INC.

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 1995

	1995 \$	1994 \$
Notes to the Statement of Cash Flows		
1. Reconciliation of cash		
For the purposes of the statement of cash flows, cash includes cash on hand and in banks and investments in money market instruments. Cash at the end of the year as shown in the statement of cash flows is reconciled to the related items in the balance sheet as follows:		
Cash on hand	4,000	3,200
Cash at bank	(30,437)	28,644
Deposits at call	87,097	687,476
	<u>\$ 54,660</u>	<u>\$719,320</u>
2. Reconciliation of net cash from operating activities to operating profit(loss) after income tax and extraordinary items.		
Operating profit(loss) after income tax and extraordinary items	506,420	15,083
Depreciation and Amortisation	288,119	125,723
Lease Interest	14,921	12,843
Loss on Disposal of Assets	13,727	-
Provision for Doubtful Debts	12,787	12,787
Changes in Assets and Liabilities:		
Increase in Receivables	(259,423)	145,088
Increase in Other Current Assets	(11,380)	(1,463)
Increase in Inventory	(9,704)	(561)
Increase in Trade Creditors,		
Accruals & Provisions	119,673	(10,987)
Decrease in Grants in Advance	(23,921)	(387,492)
Decrease in Lease Liability	(17,238)	75,608
	<u>127,551</u>	<u>(28,454)</u>
Net cash from operating activities	<u>\$633,971</u>	<u>\$(13,371)</u>

Summary of Income and Expenditure by Unit and Branch

This information is supplied from project accounting and is not part of the audited accounts

Unit or Branch	Income					Expenditure		Unexpended Grants
	NSW Grants		Growth and AS-AD	AIDS Trust and Other	Other Income	Total	Project Salaries	Total
	NSW Health	Other						
Care, Housing & Transport	449,200	59,424	27,197	0	26,453	535,209	170,450	547,333
Client Liaison and Advocacy	317,770	7,340	0	9,110	16,111	432,225	144,701	450,777
Community Development	434,640	31,912	7,403	14,130	30,211	514,781	285,620	535,350
Education Unit	168,760	0	0	0	6,331	172,981	21,091	194,814
HIV Strategy & Support	634,716	21,641	50,755	34,836	24,715	745,925	169,164	744,630
Organisations, Services & Policy and Welfare	449,200	12,619	0	0	(33)	445,611	57,169	421,825
Peer Education	1,453,477	0	0	0	0	1,452,477	1,752,051	0
Peer Support	359,620	3,677	45,481	0	8,371	407,064	79,184	359,347
Programs, Sydney	335,060	9,859	6,590	0	1,241	352,840	51,827	309,012
Organisations, Sydney	334,470	27,007	0	0	744	362,611	83,763	372,875
ACON Communities Activities	0	0	0	0	31,751	31,750	17,513	25,442
	0	0	0	0	94,139	94,138	39,274	45,207
Total Sydney Office	4,785,229	159,271	117,054	58,805	317,055	5,437,418	2,840,467	5,648,010
Hunter Coast	243,022	2,824	0	0	6,512	250,829	93,530	227,209
Illawarra Region	159,536	11,161	0	0	6,527	175,224	75,290	156,530
Mid North Coast	155,547	5,051	0	0	24,019	184,617	45,886	161,090
North Coast	234,710	12,631	1,325	0,820	42,761	289,345	118,521	276,042
Total Branches	813,645	14,620	1,325	0,820	60,812	1,022,042	323,677	1,039,349
Total ACON	5,600,674	194,091	118,379	59,625	377,867	6,457,463	3,169,144	6,686,359
Other Organisations	545,405	0,055	0	0	35,229	579,711	343,615	565,828
Services, Outreach Projects, Public Health with HIV/AIDS NSW	167,969	128	0	0	2,874	170,911	72,679	199,225

Notes:

- Other income is an integral part of events, internal, external and other sales, and income under non-12 in the financial statements
- Sydney Resource Centre includes recruitment, reception, make good and building running costs
- Illiv Strategy & Support includes HIV/AIDS legal services (HLLC) and Public Health
- ACON Communities Projects includes Hunter Coast, North Coast, Mid North Coast, South Coast, Sydney, and other regional costs
- Organisations, Sydney includes Hunter Coast, North Coast, Mid North Coast, South Coast, Sydney, and other regional costs

