

JULY 2014

PFLAG Brisbane

Supporting families with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer loved ones

Message from the committee

Shelley Argent, our Vice-President has stepped back into a leadership role giving Donna our President some time to recover from ill health. We hope that Donna will have a speedy recovery and we see her back at PFLAG. Donna we miss you!!

We would also like to show support to Ian Thorpe and his family. Ian's "coming out" shows us just how difficult this can be for young people. Most suffer apprehension about how they will be accepted by loved ones and friends. However, Ian had the issue of the publicity that most don't have to deal with.

On behalf of PFLAG parents across the country we wish the Thorpe family well. We hope Ian can now get on and live his life honestly and openly without the pressure of secrecy and lies. Good Luck and know we support you!

Shelley has been campaigning for marriage equality



Daniel Witthaus, Shelley Argent and Rodney Croome campaigning for marriage equality in Colac, Victoria earlier this month.

Next PFLAG Brisbane meeting – Sat 2 August

The meeting starts at 1.30pm and will be held at the usual place - Queensland Aids Council, 30 Helen Street, Teneriffe, QLD 4005.

The visiting speaker is Christopher Pye, the Rainbow Program Leader for Relationships Australia. He will be giving us an overview of the Rainbow Counselling Service which supports people from the LGBTI community as well as their families and allies who are often impacted. He will tell us about some of the more common presenting issues that he sees, as well as taking any questions you may have.

Please come and join us, have a cuppa and enjoy the conversations.

Coffee and chat at MacDonalds – Sat 19 July

At 10.30am on Saturday 19 July we are having a get together at McDonald's Newmarket, 290 Enoggera Rd, Newmarket QLD 4051. We hope you will come along and join us for a coffee or whatever takes your fancy. It's a great opportunity to enjoy each other's company and share experiences.

Parents of Trans support meeting – Sat 26 July

The next meeting is on Sat 26 July at 2pm. Dr Gale Bearman from the Brisbane Gender Clinic will be at the meeting to talk to parents. If you have not been before and would like to come along please phone Shelley on 0409 363 335 for more information.



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PFLAG news from around Queensland

PFLAG Capricornia

You can share news of PFLAG Capricornia via their facebook page. For more information contact Ann on: pflagcapricornia@gmail.com

PFLAG Ipswich

The new PFLAG Ipswich group is currently working on a suitable place to meet. Check out the Ipswich facebook page to find out more about this new group. Or contact Christie on: pflagmtisa@hotmail.com

PFLAG Caboolture

In Caboolture, Jonathon has started a PFLAG. He would like to hear from you if you are interested in joining. There is a facebook page or you can contact Jonathon on: jonathonwoodgate@gmail.com

Gay Parents Australia

A new website is being created for LGBTQI parents and parents-to-be called 'Gay Parents Australia': <http://gayparentsaustralia.com.au/>

A crowdfunding campaign has been launched on the website Pozible.com to raise the funds to build the website. Key community leaders are being approached to help promote the campaign and make it happen. It will be a place where the 800 000 LGBTQI parents and parents-to-be in Australia can be better connected and benefit from each other's knowledge and experiences.

You can check out the possible project here: <http://www.pozible.com/gayparentsaustralia>

Open Doors and PFLAG have a picnic in the park



Open Doors Youth service held a picnic this month in New Farm Park. Several PFLAG people went along to help with the barbecue and chat with everyone. There was a good crowd, lots of good food and activities for the young and energetic. Several new parents came along and shared their stories with PFLAG parents which we hope was of help and support for them.



The ADCQ produces a newsletter twice a year called Balancing the Act. The current edition has a lot of interesting articles: http://www.adcq.qld.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0012/7104/Issue35-incl-changes.pdf



DAVID LEWIS BRANCH MANAGER
PO BOX 3193
YERONGA, QLD 4104

0490 010 951 (07) 3848 6915 BRISBANE@LATNERPROPERTY.COM.AU LATNERPROPERTY.COM.AU

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First same-sex couple marry in Australia under British law

Last month Peter Fraser and Gordon Stevenson were the first same-sex couple to marry in Australia under British law.

"Far from trying to break the tradition of marriage, we're actually just trying to join the tradition," Mr Stevenson said. "No longer should we have to say, 'Peter's my partner' or 'he's my friend' – I can say he's my husband, and everyone knows what that means."



Gay marriage became legal in England and Wales in March. The marriage equality laws have been extended to British citizens in 24 countries, including Australia. If at least one partner holds British citizenship, same-sex couples can marry in a British consulate – but the marriage will not be recognised in Australia.

Same sex marriages recognized by UN but not by Australia

Australians who have entered same-sex marriages in countries like New Zealand and Britain will be recognised as married by the United Nations but not by their own government.

The U.N. Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, has announced that legal same-sex marriages will be recognised by the U.N. even if they are not recognised by the country where the couple lives.

Australian Marriage Equality national director, Rodney Croome, said: "The UN's sensible decision to treat all marriages equally increases pressure on the Abbott Government to allow a free vote so the same can happen under Australian law."

Same-sex parenting has a positive impact on children

New Australian research suggests children of same-sex parents enjoy better levels of health and well-being than their peers from traditional family units.

As part of the study, researchers from the University of Melbourne surveyed 315 same-sex parents and 500 children aged up to 17 from all over Australia.

Lead researcher Simon Crouch said children raised by same-sex partners scored an average of 6 per cent higher than the general population on measures of general health and family cohesion.

"That's really a measure that looks at how well families get along, and it seems that same-sex-parent families and the children in them are getting along well, and this has positive impacts on child health. Same-sex couples faced less pressure to fulfil traditional gender roles, which led to a more harmonious households.

Dr Crouch said the study findings had implications for those who argued against marriage equality for the sake of children.

"I think what the study suggests is that actually children can be brought up in many different family contexts, and it shouldn't be a barrier to marriage equality."

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Portrait of Shelley

Shelley Argent, former president of PFLAG Brisbane and national spokesperson of PFLAG has had a portrait of her entered into the Archibald Prize, the country's most prestigious art competition.

The Sydney artist Iain Scott Wallace is quoted as saying: "I wanted to paint somebody who advocated for the LGBTI community in some way, so I can get the opportunity to not only meet them but also thank them for their contribution."

"I'm telling not only Australia, I'm telling the world: I am gay. I hope this makes it easier for others now."

Ian Thorpe

PFLAG Brisbane

Helpline: 0400 767 832

Address: 30 Helen Street, Teneriffe QLD 4006

Email: president@pflagbrisbane.org.au
secretary@pflagbrisbane.org.au
treasurer@pflagbrisbane.org.au

Website: www.pflagbrisbane.org.au

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