



Welcome

This is our first newsletter for 2007 and the beginning of another exciting year for us. We hope that everyone can look back and feel good about the year that has just passed.

Apologies, that we weren't able to have the newsletter out early December. Andy our Newsletter Editor like many others prior to Christmas was weighed down with work.

However, we hope that everyone had a warm and loving Christmas and as we say each year for those who may be struggling with the knowledge of having a gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender son or daughter, acceptance is the best gift a parent can give and for many all that it costs is swallowed pride and effort to seek understanding.

- *Shelley*
(Convener, PFLAG Brisbane)

Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be on 3rd February, 2007. This meeting will be the AGM so if you would like to be part of the committee or take on an official role with PFLAG please let us know.

Time: 1.30pm

Place: 30 Helen Street, Newstead

Annual General Meeting

Our Annual General Meeting will be held at the next meeting on the 3rd February. Please don't say this isn't for you, or you don't have the time.

Ask yourself what it is you want for your lesbian daughter or gay son.

- Do you want community understanding?
- Do you want equality?
- Do you want to combat homophobia?
- Do you want improved sexuality education in high schools?

If so, this will only happen by parents standing up, speaking out and working towards these outcomes. Be part of our committee and put your ideas into action. You may be surprised at what we can achieve as a group.

Many thanks, to David and Chris, who were our guest speakers for the October meeting. They are two young men from University of Southern Queensland in Toowoomba who are doing research for a play on LGBT issues and family reactions.

I was a little concerned that some parents may find it a little confronting, but all was well and as it turned out we had an amazing number of families from that region at the meeting, so it was all very comfortable and friendly.

Plus, they got enough families who were very happy to tell their stories making their task easier. Their plan is to have the play shown at next years Pride Festival in Brisbane. We wish them well.

Special thank you to the volunteers of 2006

I would like to acknowledge the hard work that our group of volunteers did this last year.

Without their support and assistance most of the projects initiated would never have been completed. They have sat at information stalls, assisted me with talks educating and informing the general community.

We have had a successful Pride Fair stall with many marching, keeping check on the helpline, spending time

at the office and of course with Long Reach for Out Reach and the many hours of packing. Attended rallies and spoken at HREOC. There are now too many to name individually, but a big thank you to everyone.

Launch of Long Reach for Out Reach

What a successful day! To me it was the culmination of a big year. It wasn't necessarily a launch, but a celebration of what we have achieved. The packs are now distributed through most high schools in Queensland.

The Queensland Police Service is using the pack as part of their training information and has been sent to every LGBT police liaison officer in the State.

At the time of this newsletter going to print about 1000 rural and regional doctors in Queensland will have received their pack. Plus, the AMA Qld will be advertising the pack in their newsletter for other doctors and Queensland Association Healthy Communities have taken about 500 to distribute. I am getting concerned that we will soon run out of the packs.

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission National Inquiry - Same Sex Couples Economic and Workplace Discrimination.

PFLAG Brisbane after putting in a submission about how our sons and daughters experience continual discrimination by the Federal Government was invited to speak at the Hearing on October 11th in Brisbane.

I talked about the difference between how our gay sons and lesbian daughters are treated compared to their straight siblings in the same positions. Grainne and another parent were invited to tell the personal stories of their children which was quite emotional for both of them, but made a positive impact.

I sometimes think nothing can surprise me any more, but at the hearing a young man presented information about the problems young people have when abandoned by family which had a huge impact on every

person in the room. These problems, he pointed out stem from their inability to access funds or government benefits because they are literally underage or too young to leave school. But what are these young people to do when thrown out of home? Where do they go?

A problem for very young people "coming out" is if family aren't accepting and abandoned by family, the young people don't have financial or emotional supports to help them through the tough times.

They have to survive somehow and because they're unable to access government benefits many are stealing or prostituting themselves. Added to this they sometimes are unaware of safe sex practices or aren't confident to insist condoms be used and so STI's and HIV are on the increase in the very young.

Others discussed the discrimination of being unable to tax share, pensions, superannuation and medical and pharmaceutical thresholds and the general inequalities we as heterosexual couples never take into consideration.

Conference: 9th & 10th June, 2007

Plans are now well under way for the conference next year.

Venue: Brisbane Convention Centre at Southbank

Proposed Speakers:

Rodney Croome OAM - Tasmanian gay activist will be our opening speaker

Ross Daniels - Past World President of Amnesty International and University Lecturer on Human Rights

David Graham - of Big Brother 2006 fame

Graham Norton - Senior Health Promotion Officer Rural and Regional Qld (QAHC)

Paul Martin - General Manager of QAHC will discuss the changes to QUAC

Tony Coburn - Indigenous Health Promotion Officer (QATSIHAP)

Dr. Wendell Rosevaar OAM - the most respected figure in the gay community of Brisbane

Campaign Launch:

We are also planning to launch a campaign about "family

values" at the conference.

PFLAG Policy

The conference will be a great opportunity to get a draft of a policy put together that will permit us all to speak as one on topics and issues affecting our LGBT children eg. marriage and adoption.

I think if we can achieve this we will feel more confident when speaking to media and our voices will be more powerful when we say "the PFLAG parents of Australia believe....."

So we would like you to discuss beforehand your thoughts on marriage, adoption, age of consent, homophobic humour, immigration.

We will get more specific about this early in the new year.

Accommodation:

Sapphire Resort – 3 star

5-10 minute easy walk to Convention Centre ph. 3217-2588. Room rate \$105 (not including breakfast).

Saville Hotel – 4 1/2 star Ph. 3305-2500 or 1300-55632 www.savillesuites.com presently \$231 per night and (\$20 each breakfast)

Rydges Hotel – 4 1/2 star ph. 3364-0800 or 1800-063-983 (has best price of the day)
(both Saville and Rydges are within 50 metres of the Convention Centre and South Bank

Remember this is a (a) long weekend (b) lots of sport will be happening in Brisbane over this weekend and (c) with so many people traveling, getting the accommodation you want could be an issue, so please don't leave it to the last minute.

Cost to attend the conference is \$100 per person for both days.

We hope to subsidise those who have traveled great distance.

Informal dinner

We also plan to have an informal dinner at one of the many restaurants at Southbank, but more about this later.

To register your interest, please complete the form on the back. Thank you.

Lobby group

Due to the HREOC Inquiry the Brisbane lesbian and gay community has come together to develop strategies to enforce what the HREOC commission is hoping to achieve and that is "to highlight the need for change and improved rights regarding the LGBT community".

PFLAG is involved with developing an information flyer that will be sent to all politicians and government bodies highlighting the need for change and why; and what rights and benefits same sex couples presently receive which is zero.

The group has also decided to send Season's Greetings cards (obviously with a gay theme) to politicians, church leaders and anyone else they think relevant.

Helpline

Just a reminder that you can reach the PFLAG Brisbane helpline on 0400 767 832. Many thanks to Grainne & Lynne who have volunteered to take on this very important role for PFLAG.

If you wish to volunteer to help us out, please contact Shelley Argent (please see the back of this newsletter, or www.pflagbrisbane.org.au for contact details).

2007 Annual General Meeting

Positions to become vacant will be: President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer and at minimum 4 general committee members are required.

Please complete the form at the back if you are interested. Thank you.

Poem: Majella Stapleton

If only we could all be so understanding and forgiving.

This poem was written by a wife of 20 years until her marriage broke down. Later her husband disclosed his diverse sexual orientation.

The conversation I had with her and this poem show there is hope for others in rural areas and to live in the outback Queensland doesn't mean you have to be homophobic as many believe.

*I talked to you the other night
And this was in the dead of night
You told me news I had to hear
It left me feeling full of cheer.*

*For you to say those things to me
It really caused me so much glee
For now I knew that you were free
You could be who you had to be.*

*So much pain came out that night
But so much joy to put it right
We talked and talked for many hours
And healed so much that was just ours.*

*And now I know just who you are
You can do your best and follow your star
Disregard the daunts of disrespect
Stick with those whose love you expect.*

*And when there's talk of fairies and gays
Remember too, those balmy days
Eating fish and chips by the sea
Hang on to that, it will keep you free.*

*Remember the fun you share with those
Who share your life as friendship grows
It will be there when all else fades
Even the passing of life's parades.*

*And if you become the fairy queen
And dress in pink or red or green
In clothes you'll always look your best
And put your bank balance to the test.*

*Then you'll become the lairy queen
See those with whom you wish to be seen
Have lots of fun and sing so well
Then go out ad ring someone's bell.*

*And your house will always be so near
A little frill here or a little pleat
No dust upon the shelves I'll see
Not like it was with you and me.
And to me now Priscilla you'll be
Pretty flash and gay and free
Able to get on and do your best
Regardless of those you'll never impress.*

*And if at times you're feeling belie
And can't work out just what to do
Just give me a call and band my ear
I really don't mind - I know you're queer!!*

*But straight or gay I don't mind
We've got on, left the past behind
What we've got is so much better
It's as if it was planned right to the letter.*

*It's so good to talk to you
To talk of tings that were taboo
To share the laughter and the jokes
And know you're not on of the blokes.*

*And with all your little fairy ways
I should have guessed in the early days
But perhaps the timing wasn't right
We had lessons to learn that were out of sight.*

*For what you have to offer from here on
Is now so much better for our daughter and son
For friendship and grow from out of the pas
The future looks brighter - what a blast!*

*Your happiness was always important to me
It's just so good that you can be
So get on with your life with fun and laughter
And may you live happily ever after!!*

Our sponsors

Please support our sponsors, so they can continue to support us!

Harrison Plumbing and Gas Services

Alan (Northside) - 0418 739 859
Dean (Southside) - 0408 707 411

harrisonplumbing@ozemail.com.au
www.harrisonplumbing.com.au

Stonewall Medical Centre

52 Newmarket Road, Newmarket
Telephone 3857 1222



George Hartnett Funerals

42 Gaza Road, Holland Park QLD 4121
Phone: 07 3849 8411 **Fax:** 07 3849 1903
www.georgehartnettfunerals.com.au



Big Budda Boom
connecting your senses

The PFLAG Brisbane newsletter is designed
& compiled by Andy Pudmenzky of Big Budda Boom

www.bigbuddaboom.com.au or info@bigbuddaboom.com.au
Corporate events & Staging // Artwork & Design
Web design & hosting // Audio engineering

pflag

PFLAG Brisbane (Shelley Argent)

Mail: PO Box 3142 South Brisbane 4101

Office: 30 Helen Street, Newstead 4006

Phone: 3017 1739 or the helpline on 0400 767 832

Email: info@pflagbrisbane.org.au

Internet: www.pflagbrisbane.org.au

PFLAG is totally voluntary & organised by parents.
Please support us.

You can assist by advertising here. For more
information, please contact Shelley Argent.

Pink

Pink Financial Services - Colin Paull & Associates
phone 02 9599 9206
email info@123taxonline.com.au
internet www.123taxonline.com.au

The Gay & Lesbian Business Association Inc.

PO Box 67, Spring Hill QLD 4004
info@brisbaneglbn.org www.brisbaneglbn.org

Gladstone Road Medical Centre

38 Gladstone Road, Highgate Hill
Telephone 3844 9899

PFLAG Brisbane Annual Membership Form

Please complete the form below and return to PFLAG.
You can also pay online, via www.pflagbrisbane.org.au.
Larger donations are always welcome. Thanks for your
support!

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Mailing address:

Email: _____

Membership type:

Family (\$25 annually - I have included a cheque
or Australia Post Money Order)

Corporate (\$100 annually [incl. website & news
letter advertising]; I have included a cheque
or Australia Post money Order)

Mail to: PO Box 3142 South Brisbane 4101, or...

Bring to: 30 Helen Street, Newstead 4006, or...

Pay online at: www.pflagbrisbane.org.au

Thank you!

2007 PFLAG Brisbane Conference - Register your interest

This form is not binding but we are interested in knowing how many people are considering attending.

Name: _____

Which PFLAG group do you belong to? _____

Any special requirements if you do attend: _____

Or, generally from your group, how many are interested at this moment? _____

Please return this completed form to

Shelley Argent

Email pflagbris@hotmail.com

Ph. 0409-363-335 anytime

Ph. 30171739 Mon – Wed 9 am/noon

2007 Annual General Meeting - Committee Applications

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email address: _____

Position I am interested in: _____

Special interests if any: _____

Please return this completed form to

Shelley Argent

Email pflagbris@hotmail.com

Ph. 0409-363-335 anytime

Ph. 30171739 Mon – Wed 9 am/noon