



President's Welcome

At the time of writing this newsletter our country was undergoing sudden political change – historical indeed, steps taken by Labor in the hope of re-election. For us, the change of Prime Minister to Julia Gillard, gives us heightened hope of being that much closer to passing same sex marriage law.

Our numbers were down a little last meeting but in a way it was a benefit, as it allowed for so much expression of feeling from those present, in response to the presentation to the group by psychologist Paul Martin. It is a nice feeling to be all questioned out and for folk to go away better equipped with the knowledge shared on the day.

Early June we had a visit from the Anti-Discrimination Commission's office bringing us up to date with information and brochures for our use in the contact with people.

On Thursday 3 June, a few hundred people (including Shelley and myself), assembled at King George Square for the official opening of the GLBTI Exhibition now being held at 157 Ann Street Brisbane (opposite the beautiful Arts Building – easy walking distance from Central Station).

The exhibition has been three years in the making in collaboration with QAHC, Museum and State Library – covers the past 120 years in Brisbane and in particular the past 20 years, as celebration since decriminalization for homosexuality in Queensland. Set aside some time to view the contributions.

More recently Rainbow Labor ran a series of workshops Fri Sat Sun and Senator Louise Pratt WA was an invited guest. On the Saturday I met with Louise, Nick -

a young politically active man from Cairns, James – Equal Love from Melbourne and later joined by Christopher from Actor's Equity Union, who is responsible for fund raising events to assist those suffering with Aids. I spoke of the function of PFLAG and Louise was most impressed with the passing of the Surrogacy Bill in Queensland.

Senator Pratt stressed how important our letters were to the politicians and we need to continue attempting the conversion of the unconverted. Our stories and reasons for seeking same sex marriage need to be expressed – right of choice – other rights have been granted.

Another issue rose at that meeting of importance to us, is the age of consent in Queensland of our young gay men and linking it to health problems because of fear to seek medical attention. Interestingly, this subject was raised later at the BBQ with expanded thought, that it is not only our young gay men but generally across our heterosexual community as sexual activity is becoming younger and younger. Across the board there are health concerns for our youth.

Apart from the PFLAG hat that evening, I was approached as a mother of a gay son and aunt to my gay nephew, on my feelings, how I dealt with things, how did I know, why I do what I do, where are my guys at in their lives; shared feelings by those who approached was so special and one should never underestimate what seems so little in giving of oneself, makes such a difference to others.

Our guest speaker for July 24th meeting is David Wells, Counseling Coordinator QAHC. A projection for your diary - Father John Kilinko will be our guest speaker at the September 25th meeting.

*- Margaret Parkhill
President, PFLAG Brisbane*

Next Meeting

PFLAG Brisbane's next meeting will be on **Saturday 24th July, 2010**.

Guest speaker: David Wells, Counseling Coordinator QAHC

Time: 1.30pm

Place: 30 Helen Street, Teneriffe (down the driveway to the Training Room at the rear of the building)

Pride Day

Pride Festival Day – what a success! Congratulations to all who gave their time to our delightfully decorated stall. With bows of coloured tulle, ribbons and beads, plus our new banner we were noticed! Many resources were handed out – the stickers were popular – folk chatted with our volunteers and it was a great sunny day.

PFLAG Library Books

If you have finished reading borrowed books, please return at our next meeting. Thank you.

Newsletter delivery

Should you prefer to receive your newsletter via email please let us know via info@pflagbrisbane.org.au - maybe you prefer print & email - that is not a problem either; just let us know.

Tips on Anti-Bullying Practices

This latest brochure with input from Nicholas forms part of a mail out package to our high schools through out Queensland. One hundred and forty have been dispatched with another one hundred and twenty ready to go when schools resumes with the remainder to follow two weeks there after. Because the mail out is broken into districts we shall be able to follow up on feedback possibly through the Librarians at the schools.

Membership

Annual membership is \$25 per family) & Corporate membership is \$100 per year - which entitles a business to advertise in our newsletter and on our website.

If you own a business or know someone who does - they may like to advertise with us.

Membership application/renewal and donations may be made via our website – www.pflagbrisbane.org.au – click on “Membership/Donations”.

A membership form has also been enclosed with this newsletter should you desire to send cheque/money order made payable “PFLAG Brisbane Inc”. It is important to write the name in full as shown.

Shelley's Report...

Letters to Federal Government

Letters have been disappointing from parents I have only received a handful in the last 3 months. If we want equality we must take action to bring change and I can't do it on my own.

Don't believe that your letter won't make a difference because it will and the more that write the bigger the difference. It doesn't need to be a very long letter just one stating you want equality for your son or daughter which includes the right to marry their person of choice.

Your son or daughter may not want to marry but they should have the right if they should change their mind. Also with an election coming up we need to be heard and taken notice of to bring change once the new government is in place.

Please take the time and send your letter to pflagbris@bigpond.com and I can then pass on your letters to those that make the legislation that affects our lesbian daughters and gay sons. For those who have written they can tell you they do get responses from a variety of Members of Parliament.

A visit to Hervey Bay High School

Margaret and myself were invited to speak to 2 classes of year 12 students on diversity and coming out and the issues that this brings for the individual and their family. Most were very interested in what we had to say and had plenty of questions. The only “downer” was a cracked windscreen on the way home.

Lismore Forum

Margaret and I also travelled to Lismore where I was on a panel that spoke about sexual diversity. The room was full of young people from the high school and Southern Cross University (SCU). Richmond River High school is to be congratulated on their initiative for this forum and for SCU to play their role by helping to make the day a huge success.

It is heartwarming to see so many young people working to minimize homophobia in their local area. Our resources were well received at both venues.

Brochures for Teachers and Administration Staff Rooms providing tips on how to minimize homophobia in schools

We have had Nicholas a student from SCU doing placement with us for the last two months. While Nicholas was with us his primary goal was to help develop a brochure that is to be distributed to every high school throughout Queensland.

We still have several thousand brochures left over which we plan to distribute nationally. We had 75,000 printed so we could share them with other states and organizations.

Be an Ally and speak up for equality!

This was our last national campaign which provides insight into what our lesbian daughters and gay sons want society to know about them regarding them as individuals, teens at school, parents and as couples. The brochure also provides tips on how to be more inclusive.

This campaign was very well accepted and hopefully will help society understand our children more than before they read the brochure.

If you would like to distribute some of these as PFLAG groups interstate or as an individual please let us know. We will gladly send you as many as you like. Again we had extra printed so we could share our resources.

Australian Story

I have had a very interesting few weeks since the launch of my book, which is selling very well. David Graham who is always a pleasure to talk with launched the book for me and later a group of us PFLAG parents went to dinner with David and some of his friends which was great fun.

From the book launch I was approached by a producer from Australian Story on ABC Channel 2 and they are now in the process of filming family and friends. The story I am guessing will be aired on either the 12th or 19th July. So keep an eye out.

If you miss either of these dates, the program it is always repeated on Saturday at lunchtime. Additionally, you can view the last 5 episodes of *Australian Story* on the internet, on ABC's free *iView* service. Simply visit <http://www.abc.net.au/iview/> and use the search at the top to find "Australian Story" & select your episode... easy!

Surrogacy and Parental Recognition

As of 1st June our sons and daughters can be legally recognized here in Queensland. Mothers can now go and get partners names entered onto the birth certificates and surrogacy for our sons is now a real option.

The only conditions for surrogacy are that:

- All parties undertake counseling prior to the surrogacy arrangement
- All parties obtain legal advice before entering into the surrogacy arrangement
- Must be at least 25 years of age
- Surrogacy guidance report be prepared by an independent counselor ensuring that the whole process is in the best interest of the child is provide to the court.

For further information, visit www.justice.qld.gov.au

- Shelley Argent
National Spokesperson, PFLAG



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connecting your senses

The PFLAG Brisbane newsletter is
Designed & compiled by Big Budda Boom

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

pflag

PFLAG Brisbane Inc.

Mail: PO Box 1372 Eagle Farm BC, QLD 4009

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.



Talking to Someone Who Really Understands Makes it So Much Easier

Working through some of the deeper emotional issues with having a gay or lesbian son or daughter can be one of the most painful and stressful experiences of your life.

Counselling is a highly effective way of feeling better and also can assist in keeping your family together. Centre for Human Potential have been working with parents of gays, lesbians and transgender for over 15 years.

Contact one of our friendly psychologists to explore whether counselling could be of real benefit to you and your family, or simply call and book a time with one of us.

If you are not familiar with how to access the Medicare rebate, one of our receptionists would be more than happy to speak to you about this.

Phone 3211 1117 or you can email us on
info@centreforhumanpotential.com.au

ADVERTISE HERE!

Contact Shelley on 3017 1739

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 - made out to "PFLAG BRISBANE INC.")

Mail to: PO Box 1372 Eagle Farm BC, QLD 4009 , or...

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

Pay online at: www.pflagbrisbane.org.au, or into our account (*Bank of Qld / BSB: 124-001 / Acct: 2023-8607*).

Thank you!