



A History of **LGBTIQ+** **Victoria** in 100 Places and Objects

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Ministerial Foreword

History shapes our identity and reminds us of who we are. For the LGBTIQ+ community, the past can be a difficult place. Today in Victoria, LGBTIQ+ people enjoy the positive transformations hard won by the 1970s Gay Liberation Movement and its public demands for equal rights. But being ‘queer’ is something that people have often kept hidden. In Victoria, prior to decriminalisation in 1981, men could be sentenced for up to 15 years in prison for having consensual sex with other men. Same sex attraction and gender non-conformity have been treated as mental disorders and LGBTIQ+ people have often led closeted lives for their own safety. While there is still work needed to advance the legal and cultural status of LGBTIQ+ people, there are many achievements of which we can be proud.

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In 2021 we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the decriminalisation of homosexuality. In this context it is timely for this report to be released. Written by the Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives (ALGA) (now the Australian Queer Archives (AQuA)), this study is the first of its kind in Australia. It identifies 100 places, objects and collections of significance to the LGBTIQ+ community in Victoria. It includes places of gathering, punishment, ‘treatment’, political activism, social life, recreation, health, from different eras and regions of Victoria. Some of these places are already included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) or in Heritage Overlays in planning schemes. Others, such as treasured objects and archival records, are held in museums, archives and private collections.

In this report, Victoria’s LGBTIQ+ community proudly claims and tells its history. It is one of struggle, resilience, love and commitment. Some stories are familiar, others have only recently been revealed. In some instances, this history has been hidden in plain sight – significant events have occurred in the places we walk past every day. Our LGBTIQ+ past is important and understanding it enriches us all. Importantly, this history is part of Victoria’s broader history and reminds us that diversity is part of the fabric of our state.

The Hon. Richard Wynne, Minister for Planning

HERITAGE
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Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's lands and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and their deep spiritual connection to it. We honour and acknowledge Ancestors and Elders of yesterday, today and tomorrow, whose collective and individual knowledge and wisdom have ensured the continuation of culture and cultural practices.

We also acknowledge the inherent entitlement of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples to self-determination and constitutional recognition.

We recognise that there is still much to be done to recover the histories of marginalised communities within LGBTIQ+ heritage, particularly the stories of Sistergirls, Brotherboys and other LGBTIQ+ Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples should be aware that this report may contain images, or names of deceased persons in photographs or printed material.

Words from the Australian Queer Archives' Patrons

How to make a history, for a long time an unwanted one, come alive again? How to find the imprints of desire, individuals, communities, in darkened side streets, 'friendly' cafes and pubs, busy commercial streets? How to portray the journey from love held close, to public proclamations? In objects, maps, love letters, cabaret signs, women's suffrage petitions, banners and so much more, all carefully kept for such a time as this. In Victoria's major cities and in country towns, LGBTIQ+ people – sometimes under duress, sometimes in joy – created their culture. While these artefacts are Victorian-centred, they will also deepen the nation's understanding of itself, of resistances to erasure and of complex cultural intersections. Every time an LGBTIQ+ person suggested one of these places and objects for this public moment, it was an act of trust, of belief in their right to have a history.

JOAN NESTLE

Joan Nestle is a historian and a writer and a founder of the Lesbian Herstory Archives, New York. She describes her work of archiving history as critical to her identity as 'a woman, as a lesbian, and as a Jew'.

This report promises the history of LGBTIQ+ Victoria in 100 places and objects, but in fact it does much more. Reading it is to muse on the ways in which queering the history and geography of Victoria opens up a series of questions about the shared history of us all, Indigenous and settlers alike, who live in the lands we still name after a dead British queen.

The authors of the report have taken places and objects as their starting point, but have used these imaginatively, so that they go far beyond a historical version of the gay guides that were so popular in the days before the internet. Yes, the obvious places are here, but so too are such unexpected and significant entries as the Circus Women's Memorial Bench and Arthur Groves's book of verse. Every reader will find their own mixture of the familiar and the unknown in this collection.

Melbourne is fortunate to house one of the top five queer archives in the world, and this report shows the richness of materials that need to be preserved and treasured. Most importantly, it is a work that one can read with sheer pleasure at the stories of struggle, love, lust and accomplishment that the report uncovers.

DENNIS ALTMAN

Dennis Altman is a writer and activist who has been researching and writing in the fields of gay history, HIV/AIDS and US politics for 50 years.

The Australian Queer Archives working party for this project would like to thank the many LGBTIQ+ Victorians, friends and allies who contributed to this history. It is a product of and for our communities, a testament to our history, and a step towards an expanded recognition, recovery and acknowledgement of the significance and value of sexual and gender diversity in Victoria's history. Hundreds of people contributed to the consultations that led to the selection of the 100 places and objects in this document. Numerous others contributed details or helped with the drafting of the citations.

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INTRODUCTION

Background

A History of LGBTIQ+ Victoria in 100 Places and Objects was commissioned by Heritage Victoria to highlight the rich, diverse and unique history of queer communities in Victoria and to demonstrate how these communities are reflected in the places, objects and landscapes that surround us.¹ Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, asexual, sistergirl and brotherboy (LGBTIQ+) people are, and always have been, an integral part of Victorian social, political and cultural life. However, the experiences and voices of queer communities have not commonly been included in the historical record and, consequently, queer heritage has remained largely invisible.

This report identifies 100 places, objects and collections that have specific and unique meaning to Victoria’s contemporary queer communities. Identifying and exploring the meaning of these places, objects and collections to members of the LGBTIQ+ communities who have suggested them adds depth and richness to Victoria’s history and heritage. It also makes visible the stories and experiences of communities that have, until recently, been ignored and at times actively persecuted. The formal identification, assessment and management of individual places of queer heritage that will result from this project will be an involved and lengthy process.

This report establishes a new framework for understanding queer heritage in Victoria, and indeed Australia, by providing examples of how Victoria’s built environment and material culture can be read in a way that reveals the histories of LGBTIQ+ people and communities.

Aims

This report has several aims:

- To identify 100 places and objects with unique meaning and significance to the LGBTIQ+ community in Victoria.
- To provide the Victorian and Australian LGBTIQ+ community with a sense of its own history and heritage, thereby strengthening its collective identity and wellbeing.
- To prompt historians and heritage professionals to consider LGBTIQ+ history in future analyses of the built environment, material culture and archival records.
- To inspire communities to recognise their own LGBTIQ+ history and heritage through commemorative plaques, history walks, public artworks and publications.
- To provide publicly accessible information for statutory authorities, heritage organisations, collecting institutions, archives, libraries and other groups interested in heritage preservation.
- To offer a preliminary model for future studies of LGBTIQ+ heritage and to address any methodological issues related to identifying queer heritage.

Definitions and terminology

HERITAGE AND SIGNIFICANCE

It is important to consider and define the term ‘heritage’, and other associated words, at the outset of this report. What is it that we mean when we refer to heritage? In general terms, heritage consists of all that is inherited from previous generations, including buildings and structures, trees and vegetation, precincts and landscapes. It includes our homes, workplaces, transport infrastructure, industrial sites, places we go to socialise, worship, play sport and engage in recreational activities, as well as our parks, gardens, and waterways. Heritage also encompasses surviving objects from the past, including documents, photographs and textiles. It is important to note that in this report ‘heritage’ applies to objects and places that exist. Many of the suggestions for inclusion in the report no longer exist except in memory. These might be thought of as ‘lost heritage’.

In addition to these tangible objects and places, intangible cultural heritage relates to cultural and spiritual practices, traditions, memories, stories, rituals, knowledge and skills, which are often passed down from generation to generation.² Although we cannot see or hold things of intangible heritage, they are meaningful and of great value, often playing a critical role in shared identity and culture.

In Victoria, the cultural heritage significance of a place or an object is guided by the *Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter 2013* and assessed according to the Heritage Council of Victoria’s *Victorian Heritage Register Criteria and Threshold Guidelines 2019*. These assessment criteria examine aesthetic, historic, scientific, social and spiritual value. Places and objects that are

formally assessed and determined to be of State level heritage significance may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) which means they are protected and managed under the *Heritage Act 2017*.³

Heritage practice involves making choices relating to what to preserve, how to preserve it, and how to communicate its history and importance to the public through interpretation. While there is no single approach to assessing value in a heritage context, heritage bodies – like Heritage Victoria – provide clear guidelines, standardised terminology and accepted professional principles for the assessment and interpretation of heritage sites and objects. Formal assessment of the significance of heritage objects and places guides decision-making around their protection, preservation, conservation, and access.⁴

In recent years, social value – which is similar to, but not always the same as intangible cultural heritage – has increasingly been recognised as central to the assessment of heritage significance. Social value refers to ‘a collective attachment to a place or object that embodies meanings and values that are important to a community or cultural group’.⁵ ‘Meaning’ might be the ways in which material culture enriches people’s lives and represents memories, stories, events and lived experiences, providing a sense of shared identity and connection to community and to the past. The attachment of the community to the particular place or object might be for spiritual, religious, cultural or political reasons, or derived from common experiences. This collective attachment or social value might be physically evident, or may be revealed through research or through a broad process of community engagement, sharing and remembrance. Increasing focus on social value within heritage practice has encouraged broader considerations of how to assess significance.

¹ For inclusivity and ease of expression, both ‘queer’ and ‘LGBTIQ+’ are used interchangeably in this report. We acknowledge that standards of respectful language are constantly changing and that some words—like ‘queer’—have a history as an insult before being reclaimed and affirmed for contemporary use. For more on respectful LGBTIQ+ language usage in historical writing see the section on Historical LGBTIQ+ language below.

² ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites), ‘The ICOMOS Charter for the Interpretation and Presentation of Cultural Heritage Sites’, 2008.
³ *The Burra Charter: The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance, 2013*, Australia ICOMOS Incorporated, 2013; Victorian Heritage Register Criteria and Threshold Guidelines, Heritage Council of Victoria, 2019; Heritage Council Victoria, <https://heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/heritage-protection/heritage-protection-explained/>, accessed 7 August 2020.
⁴ Roslyn Russell and Kylie Winkworth, *Significance 2.0: A Guide to Assessing the Significance of Collections*, Collections Council of Australia, 2009.
⁵ *Victorian Heritage Register Criteria and Threshold Guidelines*, Heritage Council of Victoria, 2019, p. 18.

QUEER HERITAGE

Queer history and heritage is complex and multi-layered. However, it can be challenging to find surviving material culture – including buildings, objects and records – that reflect the experiences, and therefore history and heritage, of LGBTIQ+ people.

Since Australia was colonised by Europeans, the refusal of individuals to conform to the dominant social norms of sex, gender and sexuality has resulted in a variety of penalties, including criminalisation, vilification, discrimination and marginalisation. While this did not always prevent non-conforming behaviour, it did mean that LGBTIQ+ people often lived very discreet lives, and sometimes in ways that did not leave any trace.

As a result of the criminalisation of sex between men and the marginalisation of diverse expressions of gender and sexuality, traces of the lives of some LGBTIQ+ people in Australia are over-represented in the archives of legal and health institutions. Records like these offer some insight into the history of queer people in Australia. However, it is often difficult to find documents that reflect the experiences of queer people or the emergence and development of their communities outside of this legal and medical context. In addition, some of these legal and medical records have been deliberately destroyed, and some of the buildings and places that have importance to queer communities have been demolished or changed over time.

Given these barriers, the breadth of queer heritage of Victoria that is reflected in our built and natural environments has often gone unrecognised. To rectify this, places and objects that have meaning to queer communities need to be identified. This report aims to expand the visibility of all LGBTIQ+ communities in Victorian history and heritage. In doing so it also begins to redress an imbalance in queer history, which has at times focussed heavily on the experiences of homosexual men.

Actively interrogating individual and collective memory, archival collections, newspapers and court records is crucial to giving voice to the heritage of minority communities. Acknowledging queer heritage in turn recognises and celebrates the

unique experiences, struggles, achievements and contributions of these communities. It also adds to the richness and diversity of the broader Victorian community’s shared history.

It is important to note that some of the 100 places, objects and collections featured in this report have been formally assessed and found to be of heritage significance. Some are of State level significance and are included in the Victorian Heritage Register. Others are of local level significance and are included in the Heritage Overlays of Local Government Planning Schemes. But their significance in relation to queer heritage or their connection to Victoria’s LGBTIQ+ communities is often not reflected in the associated documentation.

The intention of this report is to identify places and objects that have strong social value, meaning or importance to the queer community, and that may be potentially significant for that reason. Additionally, it can also provide further information regarding LGBTIQ+ connections to places and objects that have already been recognised as having heritage significance for other reasons.

The 100 places, objects and collections identified in this report demonstrate that queer heritage manifests in many different ways. Queer heritage includes material culture associated with laws, regulations and policies; particular individuals and intimate relationships; political organising and advocacy; cultural and social events and activities; and community-building. All of these places, objects and collections in this report provide deeper insight into the lives of LGBTIQ+ people in Victoria.

HISTORICAL LGBTIQ+ LANGUAGE

LGBTIQ+ history and heritage are complex because the language used to refer to people, communities and categories of identity have differed markedly over time and place. The terms lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender diverse, intersex, queer, asexual, brotherboy and sistergirl have come to be used in the past fifty years as the most respectful and inclusive way to refer to LGBTIQ+ people.⁶ In earlier periods a very different set of terms and euphemisms were used to describe people with diverse genders, sexual characteristics and sexualities. The usage of different language

often overlapped and has been contested. This report uses both the language currently in common use – **LGBTIQ+** and **queer** – as well as the historical terminology of the period relevant to the citation. Some of this historical terminology can sit uncomfortably next to the language used by today’s communities. By respectfully holding current language and historical terms up in contrast, the report acknowledges the richness and dynamism of the history and heritage of LGBTIQ+ people and communities.

In the nineteenth century, the words used to refer to LGBTIQ+ people were very limited. Same-sex attracted men were commonly described by others using terms derived from offences in Christian tradition or the criminal law: **sodomy (sodomite)** and **buggery (bugger)**. Within the safety of their own social circles they may have referred to themselves as **mollies** and later as **uranians** (internationally) or **queans/queens**. People with intersex variations were called **hermaphrodites**, although this term was also used to describe many forms of gender and sexual diversity beyond what ‘intersex’ is used to designate today. Same-sex attracted women, transgender, gender diverse and asexual people had a lower public profile. Most often LGBTIQ+ people protected themselves from discrimination by living discreet lives. Seeking to ‘pass’ as heterosexual and cisgender, most LGBTIQ+ people hid in plain sight. They may not have used distinct labels for themselves. Those in same-sex relationships often used the language of **friendship** as a safe euphemism to acknowledge their emotional bonds.

From the late nineteenth century, when doctors and other scientists began to study sexual and gender diversity, new language came into public use. Psychiatrists and sexologists classified lesbian, gay and bisexual people as sexual **inverts** or **perverts**. By the mid-twentieth century, these terms were displaced by **homosexual** and **bisexual**. Hermaphrodite began to be replaced with **intersexuality** and **intersex** from the 1920s. **Transvestite** was used to refer to gender diverse people from 1910, as was the term **transsexual** from 1949, when gender transition was becoming more widely known. From the 1940s, gay men and perhaps other queer people in Australia described themselves as **kamp**, spelled in that period with a ‘k’. Reflecting their sexual roles and styles, some people began to refer to themselves as **butch** and **femme** (for women) and **bitch** and **butch** (for men). The language of **drag**, **cross-dressing** and gender **impersonation** and **personation** was used within the

community to signal different types of gender non-conformity. These practices could include elements of using opposite-sex pronouns and cross-dressing for entertainment, and to affirm gender identity; elements that are not simple to disentangle today.

In the 1970s the language currently in use began to emerge. **Transgender** came into use from 1971 (although did not displace earlier terminology until the 1990s). In Australia **camp** (with a ‘c’) was briefly the most common label that lesbian women and gay men used to describe themselves, before **gay** became more prominent: used at that time by both homosexual women and men. In the later 1970s and 1980s, the term **lesbian** became popular in the liberation movements to promote female visibility, but many homosexual women continued to describe themselves as **gay**.

In the 1990s, many women reclaimed a former insult, **dyke**, as a way to self-identify. Similarly, people came to self-identify with the previously sexological category **bisexual**. Other LGBTIQ+ people reclaimed **queer** as an identity label that was critical of the gender and sexual norms emerging in mainstream LGBTIQ+ culture, or as a descriptor that embraced sexual and gender diversity but rejected the notion of a stable sexual or gender ‘identity’. In the 2000s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders promoted **sistergirl** and **brotherboy** as terms that drew on Indigenous traditions of sexual and gender diversity. Transgender people often identify more simply as **trans**, also using **transman** or **transwoman**, or as their affirmed gender without any further qualification. And other names on a spectrum of gender diversity became common, such as **non-binary**, **gender-diverse**, **gender non-conforming**, **transmasc**, or **transfemme**. **Cis** or **cisgender** has been applied to people whose gender identity matches their sex assigned at birth. **Queer** came to be used as an inclusive term to encompass the whole spectrum of LGBTIQ+ identities, that now also includes **pansexual**, **ace**, or **asexual**, and **aromantic** people.

6 ‘LGBTIQ+ Inclusive Language Guide’, Victorian Government, <https://www.vic.gov.au/inclusive-language-guide>, accessed 28 September 2020.



Methodology

PROJECT INCEPTION

This study is the first of its kind in Australia. The impetus for this project came from the Victorian branch of the Australian Labor Party’s 2018 election commitment to ‘review heritage protection processes to include LGBTI social history’.⁷ Responsibility for organising this review was assigned to Heritage Victoria, the government’s principal non-Aboriginal cultural heritage agency. In 2019, Heritage Victoria began discussions with the Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives (since renamed the Australian Queer Archives, see below), a community-based organisation that has been collecting and preserving materials relating to Australia’s LGBTIQ+ history since 1978. AQuA was engaged by Heritage Victoria to coordinate the process of creating, with community input, a shortlist of 100 significant sites, objects and collections within Victoria, and to write and produce the final report. In December 2020, after a two-year consultation to adopt a more inclusive name, a special General Meeting of AQuA’s members voted to adopt a new name for the organisation: Australian Queer Archives (AQuA).

WORKING PARTY AND REFERENCE GROUP

The AQuA Committee of Management appointed Graham Willett as Project Manager, to undertake and coordinate the research and writing of the report. It also appointed a Working Party from among its members to assist with data collection and community consultation and report drafting. The Working Party comprised Angela Bailey, Timothy W. Jones, and Sarah Rood. Other committee members, volunteers, and community members were invited to contribute subject matter expertise on an ad hoc basis.

Heritage Victoria appointed Marina Larsson as Project Manager. A Reference Group was appointed, including the Project Managers, AQuA’s Working Party and representatives of Heritage Victoria. The Reference Group was established to oversee

the progress of the project and to bring a diversity of knowledge and experience to the research and writing of this report. The Reference Group met several times during the project, to review and comment on the draft report and on the list of places, objects and collections to be included.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

In working towards the goal of identifying 100 objects, places and collections of meaning to LGBTIQ+ communities, it was considered essential to engage in broad community consultation. Given that the nature of LGBTIQ+ history has meant that individuals and groups within these communities have rarely had a voice in relation to heritage, it was crucial that LGBTIQ+ people take an active part in this process. The intention was to ensure that the selections made were representative of a wide variety of perspectives and experiences within queer communities. The community engagement process therefore involved several different elements.

The project was promoted online through the creation of a page on the Engage Victoria website. The project page, titled ‘A History of LGBTIQ+ Victoria in 100 Places and Objects’, described the project and provided a way for people to suggest places and objects for inclusion: <https://engage.vic.gov.au/history-lgbtqi-victoria>.

The website invited people to provide comments and suggestions about places of meaning to them, and included several questions to prompt engagement, such as:

- Do you know of significant objects/collections related to LGBTIQ+ history in Victoria? Where are they? Why are they significant?
- There are many groups within the LGBTIQ+ community. Who would you especially like to see represented in this study? What forms of heritage (buildings, places, objects) could represent them?
- What important places do you have personal memories about?

More than 150 people responded with one or more suggestions of meaningful places, objects or collections that they would like to see included

in the report. This process generated many useful suggestions and promoted awareness of the project.

The call-out for community contributions to the project was publicised online through various social media channels, including Facebook and Twitter, as well as an article in *The Age* newspaper and at in-person events. On 19 January 2020, AQuA set up a community feedback table at Victoria’s Pride festival, the Midsumma Carnival. Community members were invited to identify places of importance to them on maps of Melbourne and Victoria, and hundreds of suggestions were received.

The project was promoted through local radio stations and presentations made to a variety of different groups and stakeholders, including Heritage Victoria, the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), archaeologists, heritage professionals and LGBTQI+ activists. AQuA also sought input from key individuals with expert knowledge in cultural heritage and queer history. Some of the planned promotional events had to be cancelled as a result of the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic.

SELECTION AND REPORT WRITING

The decision to limit the selection of places, objects and collections to 100 was made to help define the scope of the project. The list presented in this report is neither finite nor definitive. Rather, it is a starting point that showcases the remarkable depth and diversity of queer heritage in Victoria.

The community consultation and research process resulted in a large number of proposed places, objects and collections. This list was then reviewed by the Working Party, which selected a final list of 100, chosen to represent the diversity and range of LGBTQI+ communities and experiences. The 100 citations featured in this report span the range of modern Victorian history, dating from the 1830s to the present day. It includes material culture found in inner and suburban Melbourne, as well as rural and regional communities. A wide range of desires, cultures, behaviours and identities are represented. This report was produced collaboratively, with the writing of the citations shared by members

of AQuA’s Working Party, as well as community members with particular expertise.

Report structure

This report has been structured according to themes inspired by *Victoria’s Framework of Historical Themes*, which provides a guide for the recognition of Victoria’s diverse heritage within a broad thematic context.⁸ The 100 objects, places and collections have been grouped into nine overarching themes: Activism and Protest; Commemoration; Community Health and Wellbeing; Intimate Relationships and Personal Collections; Precincts and Archival Collections; Social life, Recreation and Gathering Places; Spiritual and Cultural Life; Surveillance, Persecution and the Law; and Visibility.

A short citation has been provided for each of the 100 places, precincts, objects and collections, providing details including: location and description, a comment on existing heritage significance, a summary history in relation to LGBTIQ+ communities, the meaning and value of the place, object or collection to queer communities and a list of sources for further reference.

The themes and the places, objects and collections detailed within each citation are not arranged according to any hierarchy of priority or importance. They are intended to be used to inspire, encourage and guide future work to identify, assess and manage heritage places and objects that are, have been and are likely to become meaningful to queer people and their communities.

⁷ ‘Victorian Branch Australian Labor Party Platform 2018’, Victorian Labor, p. 97, <https://www.viclabor.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Platform-2018-Final-Web.pdf>, accessed 30 September 2020.

⁸ *Victoria’s Framework of Historical Themes*, Heritage Council of Victoria, 2010.

[illegible]

Skorus Books

REAR, 151 ACLAND STREET, ST KILDA

In early 1970 a group of five women gathered in a flat in Acland St, St Kilda and established an organisation with the striking, if somewhat obscure, name of Daughters of Bilitis (DOB), later the Australasian Lesbian Movement. It was a founding moment Australian lesbian and gay history – the first organisation founded by homosexual people with the aim of changing social attitudes. DOB's goal was to 'improve the lot of the female homosexual by attempting to improve her public image, and by helping her to understand herself'.

The group recruited by word of mouth, with advertisements in a British lesbian magazine, posters at the University of Melbourne, features in magazines and appearances on local radio and television. By 1970 there were about 25 to 30 members. Social events were one part, albeit an important part, of the group's purpose but parties of two or three dozen women were putting a strain on members whose flats and houses were being used. After a brief stint in Dalgety Street, eventually Noelle, a member of DOB, offered the backroom of her bookshop, Skorus Books, at 151 Acland Street, St Kilda for an affordable weekly rent.

Skorus bookshop was an early example of the way in which the women's movement with its do-it-yourself ethos created its own places in which to meet and organise, to develop and promote and share ideas (see **Women's Cultural Palace**). Feminist lesbians adopted this ethos and shared many of these women's spaces.

The bookshop's back room provided a place where DOB's members and friends could gather for parties, bingo nights, drama nights and business meetings. In some months there were three or four events.

For some members, such occasions held as they were in a safe, welcoming place, provided their first encounter with other lesbians. Many developed an entirely new confidence, and friendships and relationships were formed that often lasted decades.

Skorus Books was important, too, because it stocked a range of materials not otherwise readily available in mainstream bookshops including women's liberation and gay liberation publications and even gay male porn. It has been suggested that it was the first gay bookshop in Melbourne. Eventually the bookshop went broke, in part because Noelle in her generosity gave away as much stock as she sold. And new opportunities for socialising were developing – Society Five, Checkmates and Spangles all ran dances and parties.

Inevitably, there were disagreements within DOB between those who wanted to change the world – to get it to understand and accept lesbians – and those who thought that arranging a few pleasant social events was enough. These disagreements led one group to break away and form the Australasian Lesbian Movement. The explicit name of this group attests to its newfound confidence and defiance. Another group, known as Claudia's Group, was set up to meet the social needs of lesbians.

While neither of these groups lasted long, they had started an influential movement that continues today.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Liz Ross, 'We were Catalysts for Change ...', *Journal of Lesbian Studies*, Vol. 13, No. 4, October 2009, pp. 442-460.

Phyllis Papps and Francesca Curtis Collection, Australian Queer Archives.

The Chapter House, St Paul's Cathedral

197-203 FLINDERS LANE, MELBOURNE

The Chapter House of St Paul's Anglican Cathedral was constructed in the late nineteenth century and is located above the gateway that opens between Flinders Lane and Chapter House Lane. It was designed by prominent Melbourne architect Joseph Reed. The Chapter House has served as a meeting place for the cathedral chapter and other community organisations, as well as a venue for lectures and exhibitions. The building also has particular meaning to LGBTIQ+ communities as the site of the founding of the Campaign Against Moral Persecution in Victoria, later Society Five.

The Anglican church in Victoria has a long tradition of liberal attitudes, and in the 1970s, the Chapter House played an important part in Melbourne's queer history. In September 1970, a small group in Sydney decided it was time for homosexuals to start speaking up for themselves. They called their group the Campaign Against Moral Persecution (CAMP). The name was a play on the word 'camp', which many homosexuals (women and men) used to refer to themselves at that time. When an article about CAMP appeared in *The Australian* in September 1970, the response was electric. Press, radio and television clamoured to interview them. It became clear that this was something homosexuals all over Australia had been waiting for. Many wrote excitedly to the CAMP's post office box asking how they could be involved.

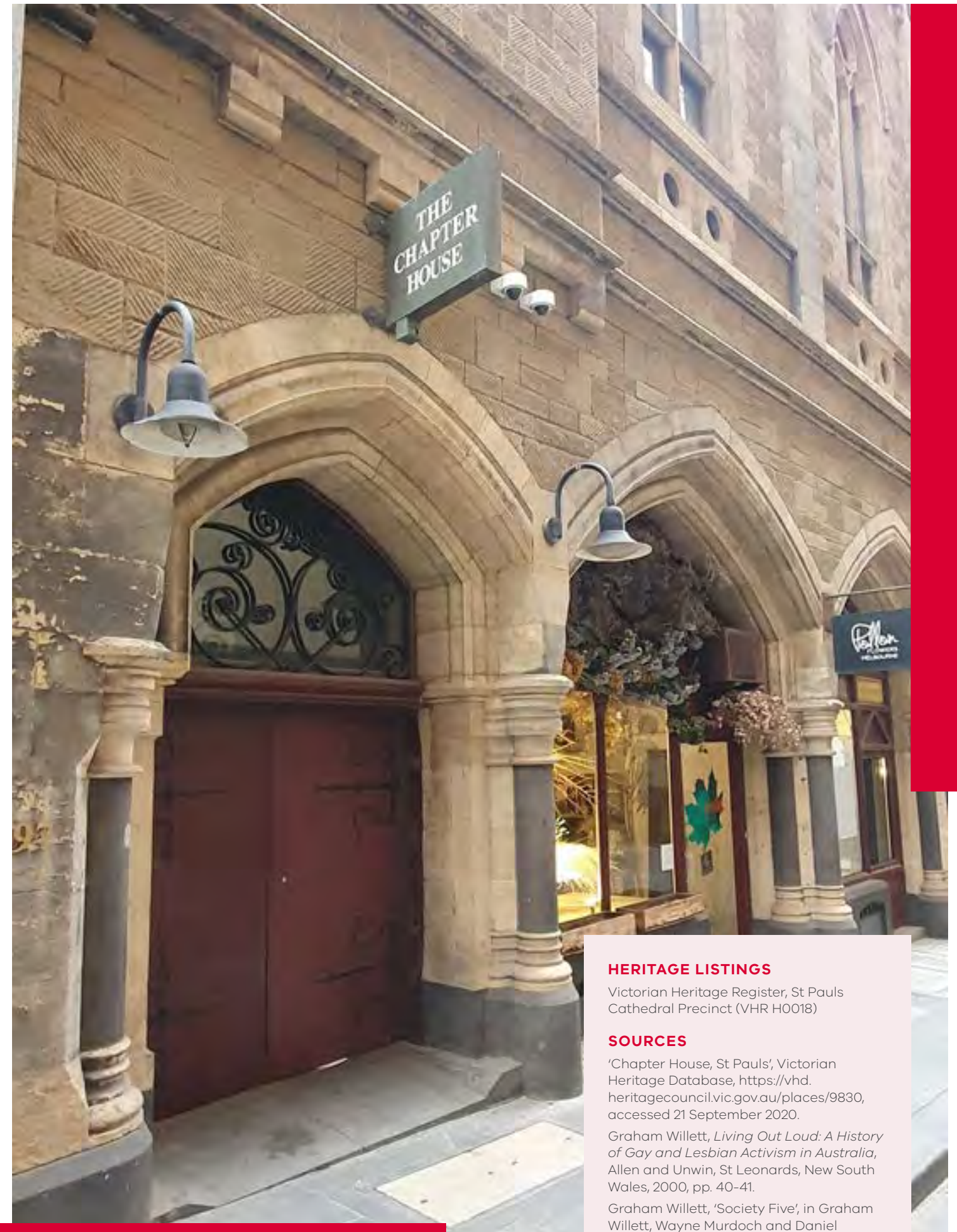
It soon became clear that there was a need for branches in other cities. In November 1970, CAMP's Sydney founders sent David Widdup, one of their earliest and most enthusiastic supporters, to establish a branch of CAMP in Melbourne. He

contacted local supporters to arrange a meeting. Among them was Anglican clergyman David Conolly, who was well connected to Melbourne's Anglican community, including the administrators of St Paul's Cathedral. He gained permission for the group to use the Chapter House for its inaugural meeting.

It was there in November 1970 that around 40 people gathered to form a Victorian branch of CAMP, which was later named Society Five. Male and female co-chairs were elected, as well as an interim committee.

The group planned a program of social events to be held in members' homes. The Chapter House had served its purpose and the committee and members took responsibility for future meetings – first in private houses and then in various headquarters in and around Melbourne's CBD.

It was a modest start, but for the next 18 years, until it folded in 1988, the organisation served as an important voice, support service, and haven for homosexual men and women.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Victorian Heritage Register, St Pauls Cathedral Precinct (VHR H0018)

SOURCES

'Chapter House, St Pauls', Victorian Heritage Database, <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/9830>, accessed 21 September 2020.

Graham Willett, *Living Out Loud: A History of Gay and Lesbian Activism in Australia*, Allen and Unwin, St Leonards, New South Wales, 2000, pp. 40–41.

Graham Willett, 'Society Five', in Graham Willett, Wayne Murdoch and Daniel Marshall (eds), *Secret Histories of Queer Melbourne*, Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives, 2011, pp. 109–111.

Gay Liberation Centre

23 DAVIS STREET, CARLTON NORTH AND 259 BRUNSWICK STREET, FITZROY

Gay Liberation's early meetings were held in the Undergraduate Lounge at the University of Melbourne (see **University of Melbourne precinct**), but the group's members shared the common desire of student activists to get off campus and out into the 'real world'.

In late 1972 the group leased a small terrace at 23 Davis Street, Carlton North and established the Gay Liberation Centre. It was intended to be a community centre – somewhere to hold meetings and plan activism, but also a place where people could drop in to connect with each other and share the latest news. The building was not ideal, with only basic furnishings. It quickly became a 'crash pad', providing accommodation to people when they were visiting Melbourne or having trouble at home. This led to conflicts. On one occasion, some men who were having sex there refused to let a group of women into the centre, fuelling the debate over sexism in the movement.

In early 1973, the Gay Liberation Centre moved from Carlton North to 259 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy, above a potter's shop. Brunswick Street was busier and well-served by public transport. The space itself was large – there was room for a small library and for larger groups of people to gather for meetings and events.



Over the next few years, the centre was renovated and decorated. Rent money was raised through film screenings and dances, which were most often held at Melbournian Reception in Elizabeth Street in the CBD, and sometimes at the centre itself in Brunswick Street. By April 1976, financial troubles forced the centre to close. The dances, which had been fundraisers as well as fun, were in decline as the commercial pub and nightclub scene developed. It is now just another shop on Brunswick Street, hardly remembered at all and with no sign of its role in history.

HERITAGE LISTINGS

23 Davis Street is included in the Heritage Overlay of the Yarra Planning Scheme (HO326 North Carlton Precinct).

259 Brunswick Street is included in the Heritage Overlay of the Yarra Planning Scheme (HO311 Brunswick Street Precinct, Fitzroy)

SOURCES

'23 Davis Street', Victorian Heritage Database, <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/88292>, accessed 24 August 2020.

'259 Brunswick Street', Victorian Heritage Database, <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/95858>, accessed 24 August 2020.

Melbourne Gay Liberation Newsletter, Melbourne Gay Liberation, Fitzroy, Victoria, 1972–1978.

Whitehall Guest House

231-237 OCEAN BEACH ROAD, SORRENTO

Whitehall Guest House in Sorrento, a bayside village on the Mornington Peninsula, was built in 1904 and is listed by the National Trust as a leading guest house in one of Victoria's most popular tourism areas. It also has an important connection to lesbian activism.

As the gay rights movement emerged in the early 1970s, activists often worked together. Tensions soon developed, however, relating to the sexist behaviour of some gay men, their prioritising of gay male issues (particularly decriminalisation), and the issue of sexual promiscuity, which women experienced very differently to men.

In about 1972, lesbian activists started to organise separately – first within and then outside of the gay liberation movement. One group of women broke away from the central movement to form Radicalesbians. The name was selected because it was explicit, confrontational, and the most 'out and outrageous' name they could think of.⁹

One weekend in July 1973, Radicalesbians organised a national conference. Around 60 women from around Australia gathered at the Whitehall Guest House in Sorrento, for a weekend of thinking, arguing, discussing, and singing. The original booking made with the guesthouse was for a 'women's group' and once the owner realised the majority of the women were lesbians, some of the staff refused to work or refused to serve the conference participants. The owner's children directed insults at the women during the weekend event.¹⁰

A number of discussion papers were presented dealing with issues including monogamy, patriarchy, relationships, bisexuality, and feminism.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Heritage Overlay of the Mornington Peninsula Planning Scheme (H01 Sorrento Historic Precinct).

SOURCES

Chris Sitka, 'A Radicalesbian Herstory', <http://users.spin.net.au/~deniset/alesfem/s1sitka.pdf>, accessed 21 September 2020.

Melbourne Gay Women's Group, 'The Melbourne Gay Women's Group', in Jan Mercer (ed.), *The Other Half: Women in Australian Society*, Penguin, Melbourne, 1975, pp. 441-446.

'Whitehall', Victorian Heritage Database, <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/66331#statement-significance>, accessed 24 August 2020.

⁹ Chris Sitka, 'A Radicalesbian Herstory', <http://users.spin.net.au/~deniset/alesfem/s1sitka.pdf>, accessed 28 September 2020.

¹⁰ Chris Sitka, 'A Radicalesbian Herstory'.

St Mary of the Angels Catholic Church

136-148 YARRA STREET, GEELONG

Construction began on St Mary of the Angels Catholic Church, Geelong in 1854. The building is recognised for its use of local bluestone and sandstone, as well as the bluestone spire of its central tower. The church is an important place to the Catholic community in Geelong, but also holds meaning as a site of local gay activism.

In 1975, the Catholic Education Office in Sydney became aware that one of its teachers, Mike Clohessy, was a homosexual. He had appeared in a television interview to discuss the Royal Commission on Human Relationships, a federal government inquiry that included homosexuality in its terms of reference.

Clohessy was immediately dismissed from his position. The gay movement leapt into action to organise a response. In Melbourne, a letter was drafted and signed by half a dozen activist groups. When the Catholic Education Office declined to reinstate Clohessy, or even to give a straight answer as to whether all homosexual teachers were at risk, a demonstration was staged at St Francis' Church, Melbourne.

A week later, on 30 November 1975, Geelong Gay Liberation held a protest outside St Mary's Church in Geelong. There were about 25 people present, representing a cross-section of groups and including protestors who had travelled from Melbourne. Acceptance, a group for LGBTIQ+ Catholics, declined to participate, preferring to protest by exchanging letters with church authorities.

The protestors in Melbourne and Geelong did not imagine that they could mobilise enough force to make the church reverse its decision. Instead, they intended to highlight the nature and scope of sexual discrimination, and the role that Catholic dogma played in this.

The results of the Geelong protest were exactly as hoped. The *Geelong News* published a sympathetic front-page report, including interviews with two members of Geelong Gay Liberation. The newspaper opened its letters page to nine weeks of debate and discussion.

The appearance of a gay liberation group – with some 20 members – outside of Melbourne as early as 1975 was a significant moment in the expanding influence of gay politics beyond the inner city. The group's ability to bring people together and its willingness to engage in protest and to talk to the press was indicative of an important shift in the development of the gay movement outside of Melbourne.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR H1026).

'St Mary of the Angels Catholic Church', Victorian Heritage Database, <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/1932>, accessed 27 August 2020.

SOURCES

Gary Jaynes, 'Geelong Collection Report', unpublished collection report, Australian Queer Archives.

3CR Community Radio

21 SMITH STREET, FITZROY

Community radio was established in Australia with the support of the Whitlam and Fraser federal governments in the mid-1970s. In Melbourne, 3CR was set up by a federation of more than 60 groups and began broadcasting in 1976. The radio station was first located in a warehouse in Armadale, moved to Cromwell Street Collingwood in 1977 and finally found a permanent home at 21 Smith Street, Fitzroy in 1983. This part of Smith Street is known for its architectural and social significance as a Victorian and Edwardian-era commercial strip. Adding to this established significance is the meaning of 3CR for queer communities, which lies in its intention to encourage different voices, including those of minority communities, onto the airwaves.

Almost immediately, 3CR began broadcasting a weekly program aimed at gay and lesbian communities. The original half-hour weekly show (*Gay Liberation Radio*, later the *Gay and Lesbian Show*), has been expanded over the years by programs such as *In Ya Face*, which has been on-air since 1992 and is one of the longest running queer radio shows in Australia. The program *Out of the Pan* is one of the few platforms where pansexual issues (including bisexuality, transgender issues and polyamory) are discussed regularly and at length. *Dikes on Mics* and *HIV Plus* (formerly *Positively Primed*) are other former shows that have made important contributions.

The expansion of 3CR's offerings speaks to the expansion of LGBTIQ+ communities over the past four decades. At various points in its history, the radio station has also provided meeting rooms for community groups such as Gays and Lesbians Against Discrimination.

3CR's programs have always been, and continue to be, delivered mostly by volunteers whose strong links with their own communities bring issues, debates, news, music and entertainment to listeners.

The survival of 3CR and its queer programs ensure that it remains a leader of social change. The station is important, too, because its programs reach well beyond queer communities, helping to bring queer news and issues to a wider audience.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Heritage Overlay of the Yarra Planning Scheme (HO464 Smith Street South Precinct, Fitzroy and Collingwood)

SOURCES

'About 3CR: Station History', 3CR Community Radio, <https://www.3cr.org.au>, accessed 27 August 2020.
'In Ya Face', 3CR Community Radio, <https://www.3cr.org.au/in-yaface>, accessed 27 August 2020.
'Smith Street Precinct', Victorian Heritage Database, <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/73449>, accessed 27 August 2020.

21 Carpenter Street, Bendigo

In a suburban house in Carpenter Street, in the Bendigo suburb of Quarry Hill, one of Victoria's first regional social and political organisations for lesbians and gay men was formed in December 1976. It was named the Central Victoria Gay Group (CVGG). (Geelong Gay Liberation was an earlier short-lived regional group.)

The founding meeting of the CVGG took place at the initiative of Jamie Gardiner and Sue (who did not use her surname). They had met at the Homosexuals in Education Conference held in Melbourne earlier that year. Both of them lived in the local area – Sue near Shepparton and Jamie in Bendigo, where he taught mathematics at what was then the Bendigo Institute of Technology. Jamie made his own home at 21 Carpenter Street available for the founding meeting and for some of the subsequent gatherings.

The catchment area for the CVGG was broad, extending from Castlemaine to Deniliquin and from Stawell to Bright. Gay people from the Riverina area in southern New South Wales were welcomed, as were visitors from Melbourne.

At the group's meetings, Jamie often presented brief updates on what was going on in the burgeoning world of gay activism, but it was primarily a social group. Members took turns to host monthly Saturday night parties, especially those with farms where people could let their hair down away from nosey neighbours. Trips out of Echuca on the paddle steamer the *Murray Queen* owned by group members Peter and Dennis are fondly remembered by members of the group today.

It is indicative of the times that Sue, Peter and Dennis did not use their surnames in public.

Jamie moved from Bendigo to Melbourne at the beginning of 1979, but the group continued for at least a decade. A year later its social events were attracting up to 100 people.

At a time when it was rare to encounter a welcoming attitude towards homosexuality, and rarer still in regional areas, the CVGG was a remarkably important breakthrough in providing a safe space for people to meet old friends, make new ones and develop self-confidence.

The use of members' homes for meetings points to the risks and challenges presented by any thought of hiring public venues.

Today, rural pride groups are common. Goulburn Valley Pride covers the Shepparton, Goulburn Valley and North-East Victorian region, with a view to providing support, friendship, family, networking and fellowship. With local councils keen to promote diversity, this group is just one of many throughout Victoria.

HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Heritage Overlay of the Greater Bendigo Planning Scheme (HO30 Quarry Hill Precinct)

SOURCES

Thanks to Jamie Gardiner for his assistance with this citation.

Young, Gay and Proud

AUSTRALIAN QUEER ARCHIVES

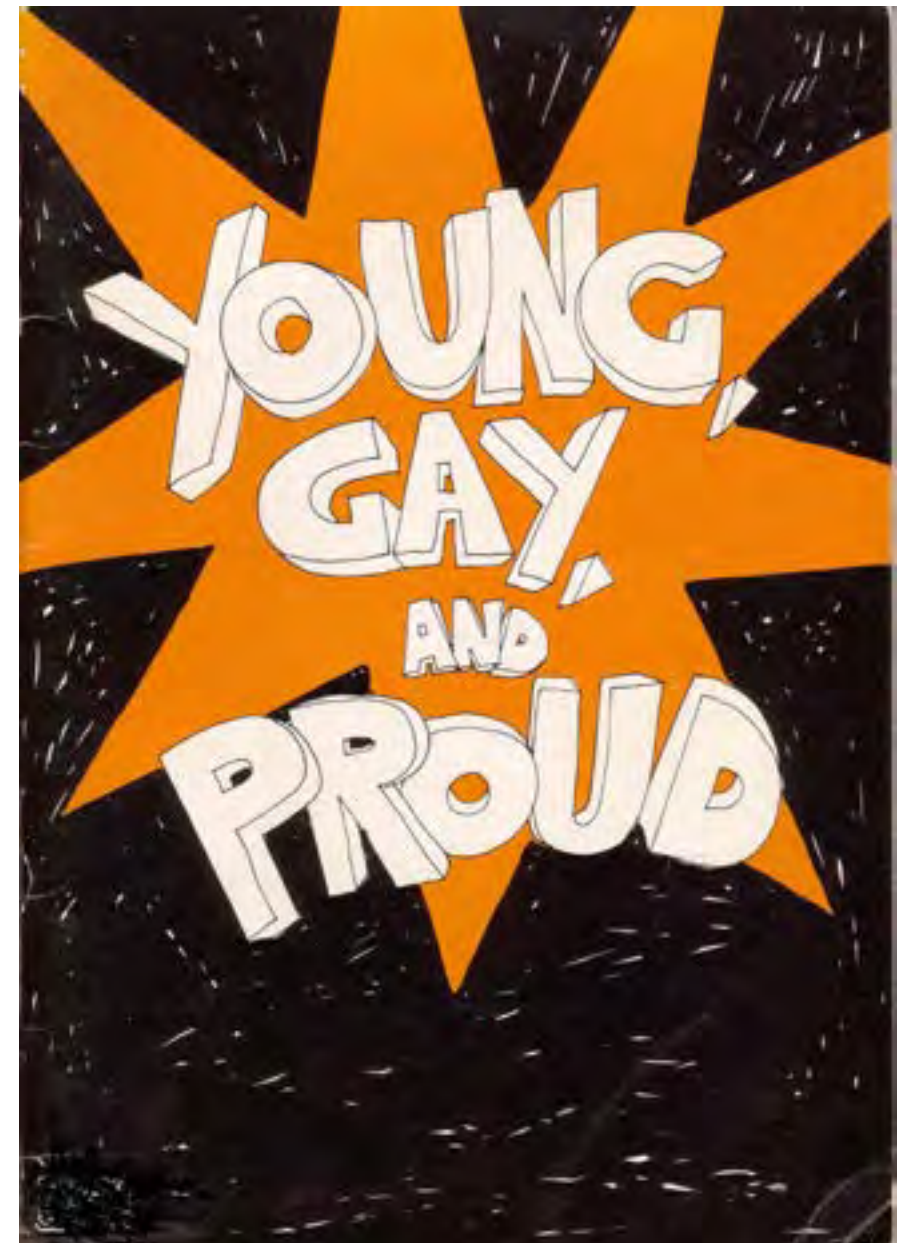
In 1976, Melbourne's Gay Teachers and Students Group – which had been founded as a result of the First National Homosexual Conference in Melbourne in 1975 – published a bibliography listing books, pamphlets, periodicals and films that presented homosexuality in a positive and inclusive way. It was a very short list, so the group turned its attention to producing a publication of its own.

Written by a collective of six gay men and one lesbian, *Young, Gay and Proud* was aimed particularly at gay teenagers. The book – published in 1978 – used straightforward and direct language, cartoons and an attractive, clear layout to communicate its message.

That message was quite simply that 'gay is OK', which was not something that young people heard often at that time. The book addressed readers directly and discussed the ins and outs of gay life in a practical way. Topics in the book included sex, widespread myths about gay life and the reasons behind societal attitudes of hostility towards homosexuality. The book outlined strategies for coming out, and ways to contribute to positive change. Perhaps the most striking thing about *Young, Gay and Proud* today is its positivity about teenage gay life. As we continue to tackle harassment and mental health issues among young gay people today, *Young, Gay and Proud* serves as a reminder that there is a joyful side to the experience that should not be overlooked.

When it was first published, the book was the subject of considerable controversy. *Young, Gay and Proud* took a sex-positive approach and was unabashedly about gay people speaking directly to gay youth. This was concerning to many conservatives who believed that homosexuality represented a significant threat to young people.

Thanks to the quality of the publication and the controversy that it sparked, the entire print run of 10,000 copies was soon disseminated. The book was distributed through left-wing bookshops, Victoria's teacher unions (which had strong policies on gay rights), university gay groups, and community youth groups. *Young, Gay and Proud* also became an important resource for many sex-education teachers in schools. This broad distribution ensured that many of Victoria's young people were exposed to positive attitudes to homosexuality at a formative time in their lives. Over the years numerous people have expressed their appreciation for its role in their lives.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Daniel Marshall, 'How to Start a Fire: Young, Gay and Proud in Retrospect: Sexual Politics, Community Activism and Pedagogical Intervention', *Traffic*, No. 6, January 2005, pp. 161-187.

Young, Gay and Proud, Gay Teachers and Students Group, Melbourne, 1978.

Papers relating to the Victorian Transsexual Coalition

JULIAN PHILLIPS COLLECTION, UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE ARCHIVES

In 1979, a small group of trans women formed an organisation to advocate for trans rights: the Victorian Transsexual Coalition (VTC).

The aims of the VTC were to collect and circulate information about trans issues and to argue for legal reforms. The VTC made submissions to the State government that were particularly focused on reforms to recognise post-operative trans women in their affirmed genders, allowing them to change their genders on official documents such as passports, driver's licences, bank accounts and when applying for State or Commonwealth services.

In 1983, the VTC's advocacy came to the attention of the Victorian government's Equal Opportunity Advisory Committee (EOAC). The head of the EOAC was Julian Phillips, who had, on behalf of the committee, developed a liberal model for the 'decriminalisation of homosexual acts' in Victoria during the late 1970s. Phillips was a lecturer in law at the University of Melbourne (see **University of Melbourne precinct**) and his papers are preserved in the university's archives. Throughout his papers there is evidence of the VTC's efforts to shape the laws affecting trans people, and in particular to include them in proposed revisions to anti-discrimination laws.

Phillips' papers reveal his long-term interest in trans rights in addition to his engagements with VTC. They include a 1977 newspaper clipping about trans people's housing in the prison system; correspondence with Monash University academic A.W. Walters about transsexual medicine and the law; and reports on his 1982 study tour to the United States, where he met with colleagues to discuss trans issues, among others.

Representatives of the VTC met with the EOAC in late 1983 and explained the challenges that trans people confronted in daily life.

The EOAC supported the VTC's call for inclusion of the category 'sexually reassigned' in the proposed Equal Opportunity Bill, but it was not until 2000 that 'gender identity' was added to the *Equal Opportunity Act*.



VICTORIAN TRANSSEXUAL COALITION

G.P.O. BOX 1991S, MELB 3001

Comprising members of the Transsexual Community with the assistance of: The Queen Victoria Medical Centre, Commonwealth Rehabilitation Service, Dept. of Employment and Youth Affairs, Committee of Self Help Groups, Social Biology Resources Centre, Lifeline, and supporting Churches.

- 8 NOV 1983

13th October 1983.

The Secretary,
Equal Opportunity
Advisory Council,
9th Floor,
356 Collins Street,
Melbourne. Vic. 3000.

Dear Sir,

We refer to the recent meeting between members of the council and representatives from the VTC and wish to express our gratitude for the opportunity to have met with you and to have been able to discuss our experiences, frustrations and hopes in such an open and friendly atmosphere.

As discussed we have formalized a submission regarding amendments to the proposed Equal Opportunities Act 1983 which we believe will help the sexually reassigned person to adjust back into society without the distress currently caused by inadequate laws.

We have attached three copies of that submission together with copies of publications produced by the VTC for transsexuals, their families and the helping services. Also attached is a complete extract of the Manitoba Law Reform Commissions report on the Revision of Birth Certificates.

Please do not hesitate to ask if we can provide any further information for you and we would gladly accept any future opportunity to meet with the council again.

Yours faithfully,

Ms. Jean D. Steele
(Secretary)

HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Julian Phillips Collection, University of Melbourne Archives, 1992.0165.

Women's Cultural Palace

CORNER MOOR AND FITZROY STREETS, FITZROY

74 Moor Street, Fitzroy is the one of few surviving sites recalling a rich heritage of lesbian and feminist organising in Melbourne. The Women's Cultural Palace occupied the building from January to December 1979 before succumbing to opposition from neighbours, the landlord and the Fitzroy Council. It was just one of several 1970s women's liberation centres that occupied a number of sites in Little La Trobe, Little Lonsdale and La Trobe streets in central Melbourne. These buildings have now been demolished, with 74 Moor Street the only one still standing.

Women's liberation centres like the Women's Cultural Palace provided a common space for diverse groups of women to socialise, share information, hold discussion groups, conduct support work and politically organise.

They were places where older traditions of feminist organising came into contact with younger, more assertive forms, including unconventional forms of dress and self-presentation and the open celebration of lesbianism.

In the 1970s, the *Lesbian Newsletter*, the Lesbian Action Group, Sybylla Press and a host of other lesbian and women's action groups based themselves at the women's liberation centres and the Women's Cultural Palace. The resulting interaction between the groups provided opportunities for learning from each other and developing dense political and social networks – forms of organising that gave lesbians the choice to work within the broader women's movement, the gay movement, or independently.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Heritage Overlay of the Yarra Planning Scheme (HO334 South Fitzroy Precinct)

SOURCES

Jean Taylor, *Stroppy Dykes: Radical Lesbian Feminist Activism in Victoria during the 1980s*, Dyke Books, Brunswick East, 2012.

Thanks to Jean Taylor for her assistance with this citation.

Sybylla Press and Correct Line Graphics

193 SMITH STREET, FITZROY

‘Doing it for ourselves’
was one of the rallying
principles of the liberationist
wings of the women’s
and gay movements.

Based on a suspicion of capitalism, hierarchy and commercialism, small groups within these movements tried repeatedly throughout the 1970s to set up viable businesses to serve their communities.

Sybylla Press and Correct Line Graphics were two such organisations that shared ideologies and, for a while in the early 1980s, a building at 193 Smith Street, Fitzroy. This site is included in a City of Yarra heritage overlay as part of the Smith Street precinct, recognised for its significance as a Victorian and Edwardian-era commercial strip. The building’s meaning to queer communities further enriches its history, through its connection to these two pioneering media organisations.

Sybylla Press was a feminist printer launched in 1976 by a collective of women committed to providing print services for women’s organisations and other political and community groups. As well as the good quality, affordable printed materials it produced, Sybylla reflected the movement’s broader political goals. The workplace was run collectively, eschewing hierarchies, wage differentials and exploitation of workers or clients. The members of the collective learnt and shared their skills with each other.

In April 1982, the Victorian government, as part of its response to rising unemployment due to an economic recession, expanded its Community Development Program (CDP) to fund co-operatives to create jobs, enable the purchase of equipment and encourage new kinds of workplaces. For Sybylla, this was a perfect fit. The organisation was soon able to continue its expansion beyond printing to publishing. Its first book, *Frictions*, a collection of feminist writings, complemented Sybylla’s continued printing of women’s movement newsletters and magazines, badges, t-shirts and posters.

Correct Line Graphics (CLG) was set up in 1980 as an offshoot of (or, arguably, a front for) *Gay Community News*, a left-wing news magazine of the gay movement. CLG offered graphic art services, again especially directed at community and activist organisations. Like Sybylla, it received funding from the CDP, which is how the two organisations came to share a building in Smith Street – Sybylla on the ground floor, and CLG upstairs.

The different trajectories of the two organisations are indicative of the variety of politics that the gay and women’s movements encompassed. Sybylla continued as a collectively run cooperative printer and publisher until the late 1980s. In 1988 the group gave up the printing side of its work, but continuing publishing until 2001. CLG went through repeated reinventions of its ownership structures and of its publications – *Gay Community News*, later *OutRage*, were its flagships – until its demise in 2000.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Heritage Overlay of the Yarra Planning Scheme (HO333 Smith Street Precinct, Fitzroy/Collingwood)

SOURCES

Bill Calder, *Pink Ink: The Golden Era for Gay and Lesbian Magazines*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne, 2016.

Jean Taylor, *Brazen Hussies: A Herstory of Radical Activism in the Women's Liberation Movement in Victoria 1970 - 1979*, Dyke Books, Melbourne, 2009.

‘Smith Street Precinct’, Victorian Heritage Database, <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/73449>, accessed 27 August 2020.

The Hub

142 ADDERLEY STREET,
WEST MELBOURNE

Victoria’s first pride centre
dates back to 1979, when
Reverend John Willis
purchased a building at
144 Adderley Street, West
Melbourne (now 142).

A two-story Italianate residence in what was then a declining part of town, the building was affordable. Willis was involved with the Christ’s Community Church (see **Order of Service, Christ’s Community Church**) which had been operating out of a building in Queensberry Street, Carlton but was looking for a new home. Society Five (see **The Chapter House, St Paul’s Cathedral**) had its clubrooms in the Melbourne CBD, but the organisation seemed to be in an unstable state. There had been talk of setting up a gay community centre for some time, but nothing had yet eventuated. Willis decided to act.

The West Melbourne building had six bedrooms, carpeted floors and was in good shape, having been recently repainted. Christ’s Community Church held services in the building on Sundays and otherwise it was available to community groups seven days week. It included a kitchen with tea-making facilities. Among those who responded to the invitation to get involved with the newly established centre, known as The Hub, were the Australian Gay Archives, as they were then called (see **Australian Queer Archives**) which held its weekly working bee and open night there, Al-Anon and Alcoholics Anonymous, and Transcare, a group associated with Seahorse, a club which described itself as a being for ‘cross-dressers’ and ‘transvestites’.

The Hub also housed a library, which, it boasted, held the largest collection of homosexual fiction and non-fiction in Australia. There were some 5,000 volumes in the collection, which were mostly donated but some were sourced through Willis’s dedicated scouring of bookshops and market stalls in Australia and overseas.

In the late 1980s, after several years of being constantly on call for media interviews and to support members of the community, Willis decided to sell the building. For a decade, The Hub provided a service for the queer communities of Melbourne that was not to be available again until the establishment of the Victorian Pride Centre in 2021.

One of the Hub’s more enduring legacies is that its library was the origin of the **John Willis Gay and Lesbian Fiction Collection** (see citation), which is now held by the University of Melbourne library.



ACTIVISM AND PROTEST

HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Thanks to John Willis for his assistance with this citation.

39

The Floral Clock

QUEEN VICTORIA GARDENS, ST KILDA ROAD, MELBOURNE

The Floral Clock in Melbourne's Queen Victoria Gardens was presented to the people of Melbourne in 1966 on behalf of the watchmakers of Switzerland. With a diameter of nine metres, the flowerbed features a concealed mechanism that powers the hands of a functioning clock. The Floral Clock is identified as a feature contributing to the historical significance of the Domain Parklands. However, it also holds important meaning to queer communities. In 1991, the Floral Clock was the site of one of Victoria's most controversial political actions, staged by ACT UP – the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power.

In the 1990s, Melbourne AIDS activists followed Sydney in founding a chapter of the American organisation ACT UP. The group was, in its own words, 'united in anger and committed to direct action to end the AIDS crisis'. ACT UP opposed what it saw as the complacency of many of those who were working on the Australian response to the crisis – including the government, the medical profession and community-based AIDS councils.

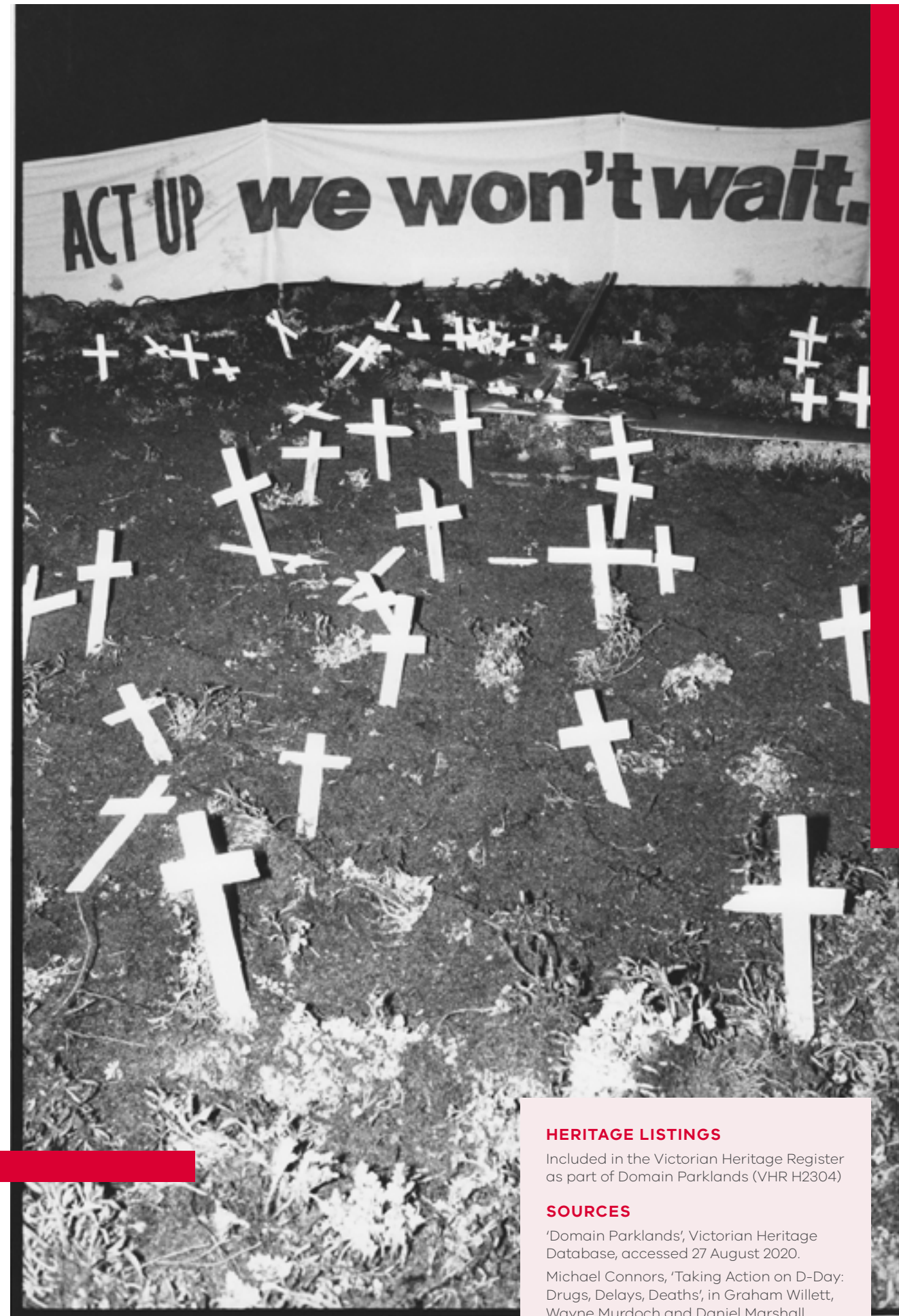
ACT UP was true to its aim regarding direct action, organising protests and demonstrations targeted at politicians, media, drug companies, and the medical profession. It promoted its concerns with badges, t-shirts, posters, and leaflets, and employed state-of-the-art technology such as the fax machine.

In 1991, a national meeting of ACT UP members decided on a national campaign to focus on the key issue for Australians living with HIV/AIDS:

access to the latest drug treatments, which was being delayed by government inaction. The strategy was to build towards 'D-Day' on 6 June 1991, the anniversary of the allied landings in Europe during World War II. The letter 'D' stood for 'Deaths, Delays, Drugs and Deadline'. A number of protest demonstrations took place on D-Day. In Victoria, there was a die-in at Melbourne's Flinders Street Station, a disruption at the Health Minister's electorate office and, most famously, a pre-dawn strike on the Floral Clock. The flowers were uprooted and replaced with small white crosses to symbolise the deaths resulting from government inaction on HIV/AIDS policy.

The Floral Clock protest is arguably one of ACT UP's most controversial political actions. It was condemned in the mainstream media, and even in the gay press. ACT UP members were harassed in bars by gay people who felt that they had gone too far.

However, the campaign was hugely successful in drawing public attention to an important issue for LGBTIQ+ communities. The protest continues to live on in public memory and its importance is strongly associated with the Floral Clock.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Victorian Heritage Register as part of Domain Parklands (VHR H2304)

SOURCES

'Domain Parklands', Victorian Heritage Database, accessed 27 August 2020.
Michael Connors, 'Taking Action on D-Day: Drugs, Delays, Deaths', in Graham Willett, Wayne Murdoch and Daniel Marshall (eds), *Secret Histories of Queer Melbourne*, Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives, Parkville, 2011, pp. 153-155.

Lesbians and Gays for Reconciliation Banner

AUSTRALIAN QUEER ARCHIVES

The 'Lesbians and Gays for Reconciliation – Stick with Wik' banner was made by members of the group Lesbians and Gays for Reconciliation, which was formed in 1998. The aim of the banner was to demonstrate solidarity with Indigenous Australians and particularly the Wik peoples of Queensland in their claim in the High Court of Australia for native title rights to country on the Cape York Peninsula.

The vinyl banner features two faux fur hands, coloured pink and black, reaching out towards each other. The banner featured at Pride marches, protest rallies, fundraising cabarets (such as *Black Featherette*) and also travelled north from Melbourne to Sydney to be part of the 1998 'Queers for Reconciliation' contingent at the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade.

Lesbians and Gays for Reconciliation and its supporters also sought to bring the awareness of LGBTIQ+ communities to issues facing First Nations people, to encourage recognition of the injustices of the past and to 'create an inclusive future which recognises the benefits of cultural, racial and sexual diversity'. The group advocated around the issues of the 1992 Mabo decision (which overturned the concept that Australia was *terra nullius* at the time of British colonisation), native title, pastoral leases, and the *Native Title Amendment Act 1998* (commonly known as the 10-Point Plan). These were all significant issues during the late 1990s and 2000s under the conservative government led by Prime Minister John Howard.

The first major unfurling of the banner was at the 1998 Midsumma Festival Pride March in St Kilda. Supporters rallied with the banner and marched down Fitzroy Street. In the information pamphlet produced by Lesbians and Gays for Reconciliation, Charmaine Clarke, who was then national spokesperson on Indigenous issues for the Australian Greens, wrote: 'We can make a difference together: Black and white, gay and lesbian. So join us at the Midsumma Pride March... I'll be the Aboriginal lesbian holding the Koori Flag'.¹¹

Lesbians and Gays for Reconciliation disbanded in the early 2000s, but its 'Stick with Wik' banner, which is now held by the Australian Queer Archives, remains as a meaningful link to the group's history and achievements.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Bridget McManus, '1000 Queers say Stick with Wik', *Melbourne Star Observer*, 9 January 1998.

'Lesbians and Gays for Reconciliation Anti-Racism Statement', *Lesbiana*, September 1998.

'Lesbians and Gays for Reconciliation' leaflet, Australian Queer Archives, 1998.

¹¹ 'Lesbians and Gays for Reconciliation' leaflet, Australian Queer Archives, 1998.

Bifocal Newsletter

AUSTRALIAN QUEER ARCHIVES

Bifocal is a rare example of a hardcopy newsletter produced by a bisexual community organisation in Victoria. Published in the mid-1990s, it reflects the emergence of a distinct bisexual community in the post-gay liberation era, prior to the widespread uptake of the acronym LGBTIQ+. *Bifocal* was produced by Bisexual Awareness Melbourne (BAM), which was established in 1994. It is a typed newsletter on A4 paper and includes editorials, opinion pieces, book reviews, social event announcements and reports on annual general meetings. There are known to be twelve issues of *Bifocal* produced between June 1994 and October 1996.

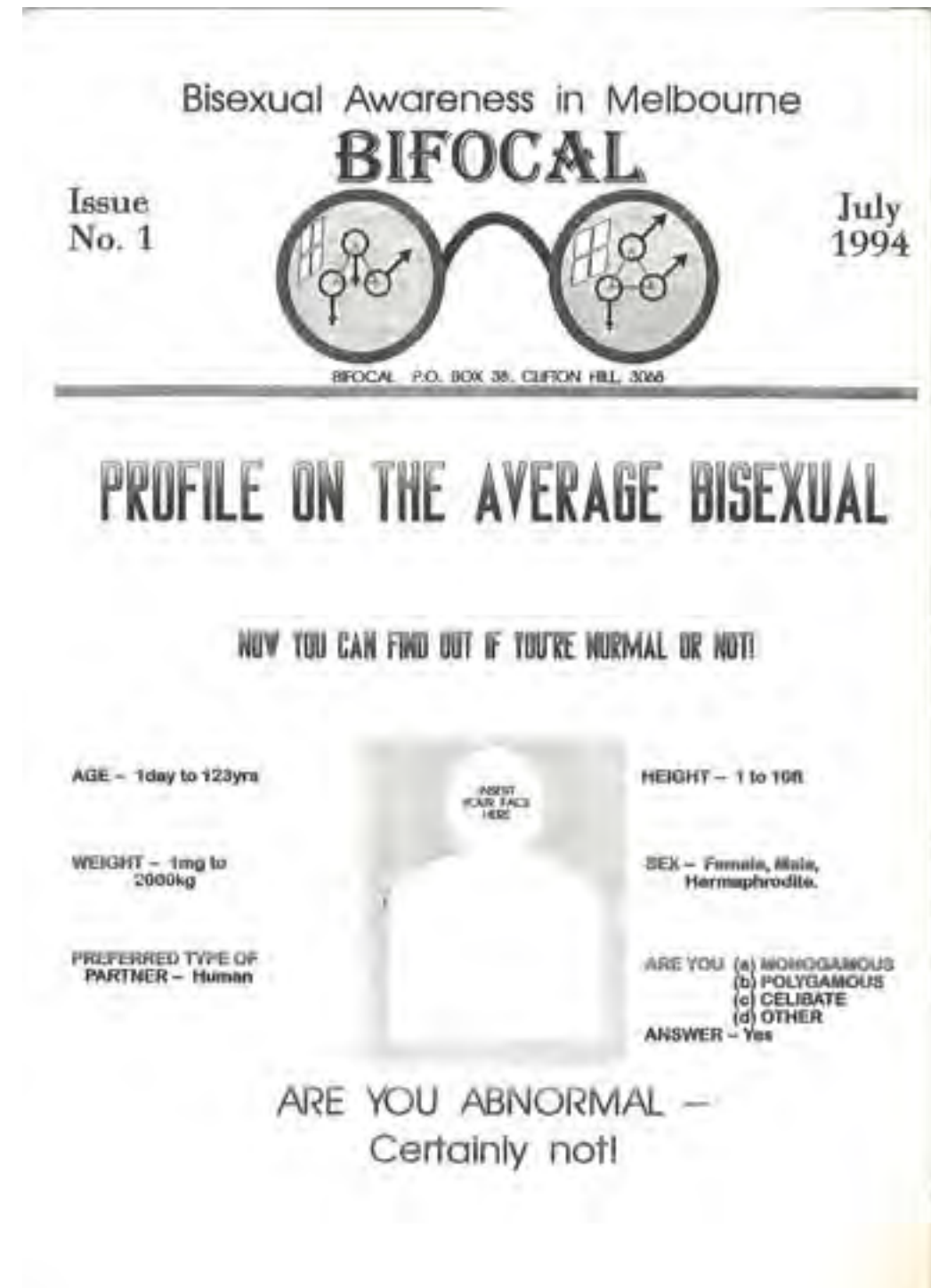
Bifocal is particularly meaningful to LGBTIQ+ Victorians because it demonstrates how bisexual people created their own social support group in the 1990s. This was an era in which a new wave of 'Bi Pride' organisations emerged in Australia and internationally. *Bifocal* reveals how BAM members proudly claimed a bisexual identity outside the monosexual gay, lesbian and heterosexual worlds. It brings to life a queer sexuality that had become less visible in the gay liberation and radical lesbian movements from the 1970s, despite the fact that around 50 per cent of LGBTIQ+ communities are multigender-attracted.

Bifocal reveals a community of bisexuals proudly claiming and affirming a more 'fluid' approach to sexuality and gender. Bisexuality was initially regarded as an ideal sexuality by the 1970s gay liberation movement, to help break down the oppressive binaries between homo and heterosexuality.

Ultimately, however, the movement struggled to politically accommodate bisexual people, or those who were sometimes viewed as 'sitting on the fence'. Similarly, some lesbian feminists looked down on bisexual women who 'slept with the enemy'. During the 1970s and '80s, bisexuals made important contributions to gay and lesbian liberation and took up the fight against HIV/AIDS (sometimes while closeted). The 1990s paradigm of 'queer' offered a fresh political language to celebrate bisexuals' journeys across gender and sexual lines.

The goal of BAM was to create a community for bisexual people and raise awareness about bisexuality. By July 1995, BAM had 77 members who were '50/50 male & female' and between the ages of 20 and 50. They established a helpline, organised two 'Bi-Bonanza' events, and held regular dinners and discussion groups. BAM members also gave talks at gay and lesbian events to raise the profile of bisexuality. BAM's newsletter, *Bifocal*, addressed issues of direct relevance to bisexuals. How can you live a queer life in an opposite sex relationship? Why do bisexual people sometimes feel unwelcome at gay and lesbian events? *Bifocal* also reveals the expansion of mainstream gay and lesbian organisations, such as Midsumma, to include bisexual representation.

In 1996, BAM participated in the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras with other states' bisexual networks. But at the same time, BAM was declining. The last issue of *Bifocal* in October 1996 indicates that membership was dwindling. Building a separate bisexual community organisation, even in the era of 'queer' was (and remains) difficult because of the low numbers of 'out' bisexuals and the tendency of bisexuals to blend into the sexual community that best reflects their current primary romantic and/or sexual relationship(s).



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Kirsten McLean, Identifying as Bisexual: Life Stories of Australian Bisexual Men and Women, PhD thesis, Monash University, 2004.

Maria Pallotta-Chiarolli and Sara Lubowitz, *Women in Relationships with Bisexual Men: Bi Men by Women*, Lexington Books, USA, 2016.

Robert Reynolds, *From Camp to Queer: Re-making the Australian Homosexual*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 2002.

Steven Angelides, *A History of Bisexuality*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 2001.

Program of the Inaugural Australian GLBTIQ Multicultural Conference, 2004

AUSTRALIAN QUEER ARCHIVES

The inaugural conference for queer people from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds was held at St Kilda Town Hall in October 2004. It was an Australian and perhaps a world first. Over 250 people from around 30 different cultural groups attended for two days of plenaries, workshops, seminars and social events. There were a dozen keynote speakers and more than 40 papers addressing all aspects of the queer multicultural experience around three themes: health and wellbeing; cultural identity and sexuality; and communities and belonging.

It is notable that alongside community members and activists, attendees at the conference included celebrities and representatives of the Victoria Police and the Equal Opportunity Commission, as well as the State government's Minister for Multicultural Affairs. This diverse audience reflected the extent to which the rights and wellbeing of queer communities had become a matter of interest to the political mainstream.

The Inaugural Australian GLBTIQ Multicultural Conference was an important moment in the history of LGBTIQ+ Victoria, providing an impetus to raise new issues, develop strategies, and plan action. It was evidence, too, of the increasing diversity of the queer world. One of the earliest organisations to represent this diversity was Multi-Ethnic Gay Men and Lesbians, established at the University of Melbourne in 1983. By the 1990s, religious and ethnic communities had started to speak out more publicly, and it was these communities that provided the impetus for the 2004 conference.

The conference was the beginning of a national peak body for multicultural and multifaith LGBTIQ+ communities: the Australian LGBTIQ Multicultural Council (AGMC).

The AGMC's mission is to advocate for its communities through research, education, and community events. Its social events, United We Feast, provide a safe, inclusive and welcoming space for diverse members of LGBTIQ+ communities, allies and accomplices to get together and celebrate the diversity that exists within LGBTIQ+ communities and beyond.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Maria Pallotta-Chiarolli (ed.), *Living and Loving in Diversity: An Anthology of Australian Multicultural Adventures*, Wakefield Press, Adelaide, 2018.

Program of the Inaugural GLBTIQ Multicultural Conference, 2004.

COMMEMORATION



THE VICTORIAN TRADES HALL COUNCIL ACKNOWLEDGES THE COURAGE & RELENTLESS DETERMINATION OF THE UNION OF THE ROAD BUILDERS + COMMUNIST OVER THE YEARS CAMPAIGNED WITH A MESSAGE OF EQUALITY, LOVE, DIGNITY, FAIRNESS AND RESPECT.



FROM AUGUST TO NOVEMBER 2012 THIS TRADES HALL WAS THE CENTRE OF THE 'YES' CAMPAIGN FOR THE MARRIAGE EQUALITY POSTAL SURVEY IN VICTORIA.

ON 15 NOVEMBER 2017 IT WAS ANNOUNCED THAT AUSTRALIA HAD VOTED OVERWHELMINGLY FOR EQUALITY.

VOICES FOR EQUALITY
AUSTRALIA 7,817,247 (61.6%)
VICTORIA 2,145,629 (64.9%)

WE DEDICATE THIS PLAQUE TO THE TRADE UNIONISTS AND OTHER ACTIVISTS WHO WORKED TOGETHER TO DELIVER THAT EMPHATIC WIN. EQUALITY IS UNION HIGHEST.



Alice Anderson's Grave

BOROONDARA CEMETERY, 430 HIGH STREET, KEW

Boroondara Cemetery was established in Kew in 1858. It is significant for its aesthetic, architectural, scientific (botanical) and historical values, and is an 'outstanding example of the Victorian Garden Cemetery movement', designed to be an 'attractive place for mourners and visitors'. There is a particular grave in Boroondara Cemetery that adds to the meaning of this place for queer communities. Alice Anderson's grave is a powerful reminder of one of Victoria's pioneering advocates for women's equality. Anderson (1897–1926) was a successful, independent businesswoman, operating an all-women car mechanics workshop at 88 Cotham Road, Kew.

In early twentieth-century Australia, many forms of employment were unquestionably considered to be the realm of men, and the exciting new world of motor mechanics was one of them. But in 1919, Anderson purchased a block of land in Kew where she had a garage built to her own design, complete with her name emblazoned across the front. She opened a motor-vehicle repair service and employed an all-women workforce. Anderson's 'little band of women drivers and mechanics' (eight or nine of them) repaired and serviced cars, sold petrol, and ran a driving school and chauffeur service. Anderson and her staff wore uniforms that were practical and, by the standards of the time, masculine – featuring peaked caps, leather jackets, boots and trousers.

Anderson's unconventional occupation and clothing made her the subject of speculation, which particularly focused on her sexuality. By the 1920s, lesbianism was becoming increasingly visible in Australia, particularly among more educated and cosmopolitan members of society. Many of the middle-class women that Anderson knew (including women who were studying at the University of Melbourne) would certainly have known about her sexuality, but no conclusive evidence remains.

Regardless of her sexuality or self-identity, Anderson put women at the centre of her professional and social life, and her business provided employment opportunities for women that were unheard of at that time. The Alice Anderson Motor Service continued after her death, before closing in the 1940s due to World War II.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Victorian Heritage Register as part of the Boroondara General Cemetery (VHR H0049)

SOURCES

'Boroondara General Cemetery' Victorian Heritage Database, <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/6021>, accessed 25 September 2020.

Georgine Clarsen, 'Anderson, Alice Elizabeth (1897–1926)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/anderson-alice-elizabeth-12772>, accessed 17 September 2020.

Loretta Smith, *A Spanner in the Works: The Extraordinary Story of Alice Anderson and Australia's First All-Girl Garage*, Hachette Australia, Sydney, 2019.

'Miss Anderson's Death', *Herald*, 18 September 1926, p. 1.

The Shrine of Remembrance

BIRDWOOD AVENUE, MELBOURNE

Melbourne's Shrine of Remembrance was built in 1934 to honour Victorians who died in World War I. It is now a memorial to commemorate all Victorians who have served and died in the many conflicts in which Australia has been involved. For decades, the Shrine has been the site of important commemorative ceremonies associated with mourning and solemn ritual. This place has an iconic and quasi-sacred status in Melbourne.

The Shrine became part of Victoria's queer history when, on Anzac Day 1982, a small group of ex-servicemen joined those climbing the steps to lay a wreath in honour of gay and lesbian people who had served and died in war. Bruce Ruxton, then Victorian state president of the Returned Services League, intercepted them. He declared that there was 'no way you can lay a wreath', summoning a nearby police officer to escort the men away.¹²

For the men trying to lay a wreath, the Shrine was simply a place where service people honoured their mates.

That they were gay was incidental. But for Ruxton and his supporters, this act represented an unwelcome intrusion into a revered space.

A representative of the Gay Ex-Services Association, which had been formed as a welfare and advocacy group only a few months before the 1982 events at the Shrine, returned to the Shrine in 1983 and 1984 to lay a wreath. The group disbanded shortly thereafter.

In November 1992, the Australian government lifted its ban on the service of lesbian, gay and bisexual people (which had existed informally for many years and more formally since the 1950s), and since September 2010 transgender people have also been allowed to serve. The Defence LGBTI Information Service (DEFGLIS), a support and advocacy group for LGBTIQ+ members of the Australian Defence Force, has begun a new annual tradition of laying rainbow wreaths in cities across Australia on Anzac Day. In 2015, DEFGLIS representatives laid their first wreath at Melbourne's Shrine of Remembrance with a former member of the Gay Ex-Services Association.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR H0848)

SOURCES

Noah Riseman, 'Laying Wreaths for Australians Who Once Served in Silence', *The Conversation*, 23 April 2015.

¹² 'RSL Head provokes Shrine Skirmish', *City Rhythm*, June 1982.

The AIDS Memorial Garden

MELBOURNE POLYTECHNIC, FAIRFIELD CAMPUS, 101 YARRA BEND ROAD, FAIRFIELD

The AIDS Memorial Garden was established in the grounds of Fairfield Hospital in 1987. Operating as a specialised infectious diseases hospital since 1904, the hospital was designated as a centre for the care and treatment of people with HIV/AIDS and research into the disease early in the epidemic. The first patient with AIDS was admitted in April 1984 and the place ceased its function as a hospital in 1996. The AIDS Memorial Garden has been identified as a feature of the site that reflects the hospital's significant and innovative role in managing infectious diseases. It also holds important meaning to LGBTIQ+ people, and particularly those touched by AIDS.

In 1987, the Victorian AIDS Council, at the urging of carers' groups, approached hospital management to create a place where people living with HIV/AIDS, their loved ones and their carers could pause and reflect upon the impact of the disease on their lives and their communities. Built by volunteers, the AIDS Memorial Garden was opened in April 1988. Set aside from the bustle of the hospital, it features a gazebo, benches and plaques set among shrubs and trees. Over time many of those who died of AIDS related illness chose to have their ashes scattered at the memorial garden.

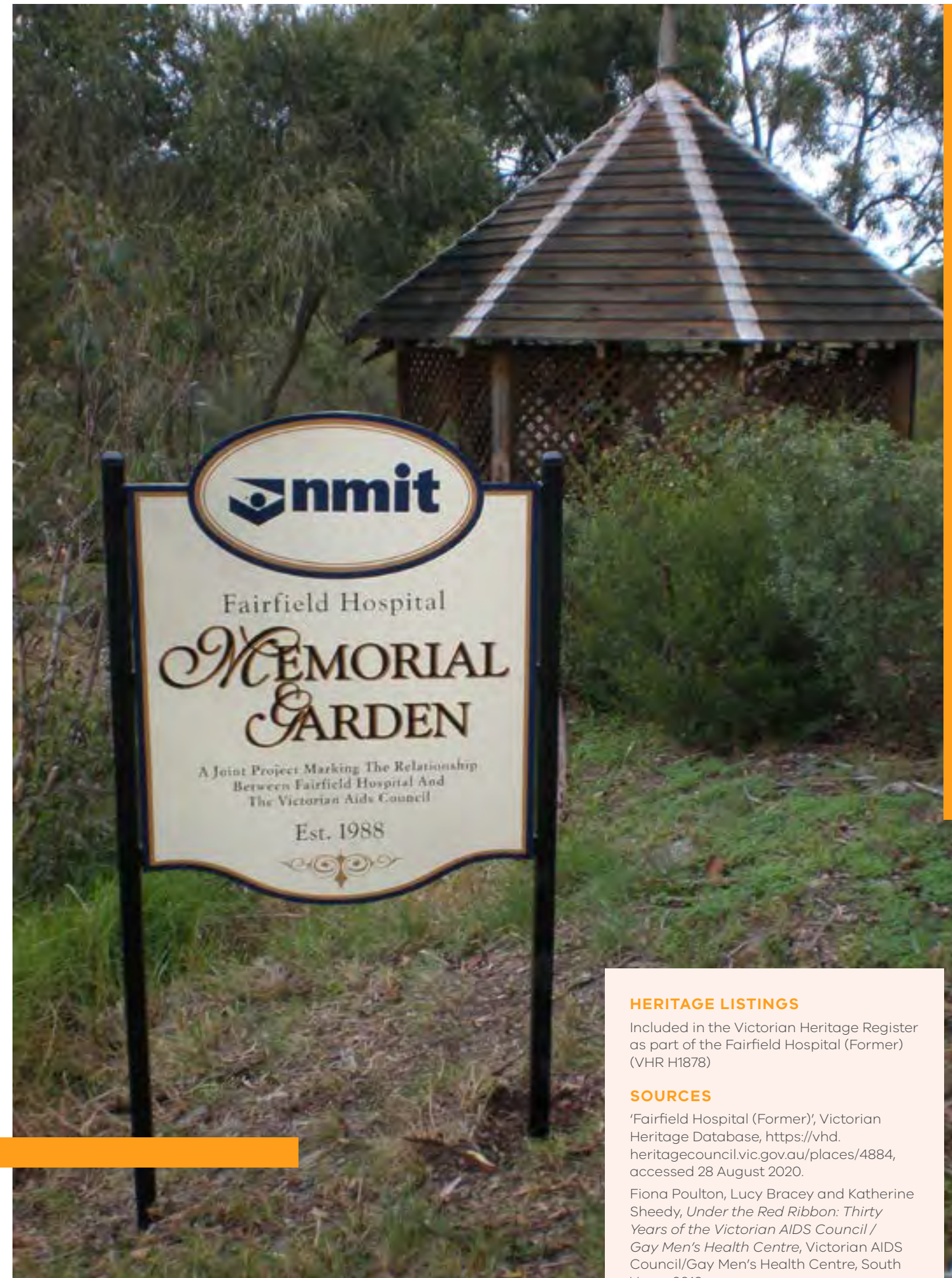
The hospital's closure in 1996 coincided with the development of new drug therapies that have made HIV a chronic, rather than fatal, diagnosis. For a time, the AIDS Memorial Garden fell into disrepair until members of the community, the Victorian AIDS Council (now Thorne Harbour Health) and Melbourne Polytechnic (who then owned the site) set about restoring and maintaining it.

The AIDS Memorial Garden is a tribute to community, from those carer groups who pushed for its establishment, to the AIDS Council, which threw its weight behind the idea, to the volunteers who built and maintained it. Without these efforts, the garden would never have come into being, nor would it have been saved from disrepair.

The garden's personal meaning is captured in the words of one man who lost his partner and was himself diagnosed as HIV positive in late 1984:

“It carries the memories of the time, just awful events, shocking, not just to the direct victims, but to the attitudes to society generally, from total bottomless love and devotion, to the most poison of evil that society can bring. The garden symbolises so, so much, and within it, hope for a better world, and it portrays that so well.”¹³

¹³ Personal communication to John Hall, shared with Graham Willett on condition of anonymity, 10 February 2020.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Victorian Heritage Register as part of the Fairfield Hospital (Former) (VHR H1878)

SOURCES

‘Fairfield Hospital (Former)’, Victorian Heritage Database, <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/4884>, accessed 28 August 2020.

Fiona Poulton, Lucy Bracey and Katherine Sheedy, *Under the Red Ribbon: Thirty Years of the Victorian AIDS Council / Gay Men's Health Centre*, Victorian AIDS Council/Gay Men's Health Centre, South Yarra, 2013.

Thanks to John Hall for his assistance with this citation.

Australian AIDS Memorial Quilt Project

THORNE HARBOUR HEALTH

The Australian AIDS Memorial Quilt Project, often referred to as the Quilt, was founded in September 1988. Drawing upon an American model (the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt), it consists of fabric panels created by people who have lost loved ones to HIV/AIDS. The panels are sewn together into blocks of eight. The project extends across Australia, with branches in all states and territories. Importantly, the Quilt was sustained by volunteer labour in each branch, until the time came to entrust it to organisations that could best care for it. The Victorian panels are held by Thorne Harbour Health (formerly the Victorian AIDS Council).

Each panel of the Quilt is unique, commemorating the individuality of the deceased with words and images that evoke particular interests or habits.

Names, poems, slogans and brief life histories, as well as photographs, Christmas trees, rainbow flags and theatre tickets all mark aspects of the lives of those who have died of an AIDS-related illness.

Selected panels and blocks of the Quilt are displayed each year on 1 December at World AIDS Day events. A formal ritual – the ‘unfolding’ – is practiced, with the names on the panels read

out, usually by those who have lost a loved one. In November 1999, much of the Quilt was put on public display in Melbourne’s Royal Exhibition Building.

The Quilt’s enormous personal, political and historical significance is exemplified most poignantly by the story of one Victorian panel, in memory of Daren Olver. Daren died in 1994 and his mother, Cheryl, created a panel to remember him by. It includes a baby photo, a photo of Daren as an adult, and a rainbow. When the New South Wales panels of the Quilt were given to the Powerhouse Museum, Daren’s panel was among them. At this point the Quilt became an item in the museum’s collection. The Powerhouse resisted calls to return Daren’s panel to Melbourne, where his family and friends would have access to it. Finally, representations from John Hall of the Victorian AIDS Council succeeded in having the panel returned to Melbourne.

The purposes of the Quilt are many, including commemorating the dead, assisting in grieving, and encouraging support for those living with HIV. But there are clear political aims, too: to bring a human quality to the statistics of loss and to promote a compassionate dialogue, to challenge discriminatory views, and to encourage HIV prevention. The Quilt is both a personal document and a public one. The Quilt’s existence is a remarkable tribute to the political nature of AIDS. Deaths in war and industrial accidents have been extensively commemorated, but what other disease has elicited such a project?



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Ainsley Yardley with Kim Langley; photographs by Ponch Hawkes, *Unfolding: The Story of the Australian and New Zealand AIDS Quilt Projects*, McPhee Gribble, Ringwood, 1994..

The Circus Women's Memorial Bench

45 MORELAND STREET, FOOTSCRAY

The Women's Circus was founded by Donna Jackson at the Footscray Community Arts Centre (FCAC) in April 1991. Her aim was to establish a circus where all womyn¹⁴ would learn circus, music, technical and performance skills in a feminist environment, as well as perform in their own ground-breaking shows.

The Performing Older Women's (POW) Circus was set up by Jean Taylor at FCAC in January 1995 to teach circus skills to womyn over 40 years of age and to showcase aerials, clowning, music, stilt walking and other skills in small and large circus performances.

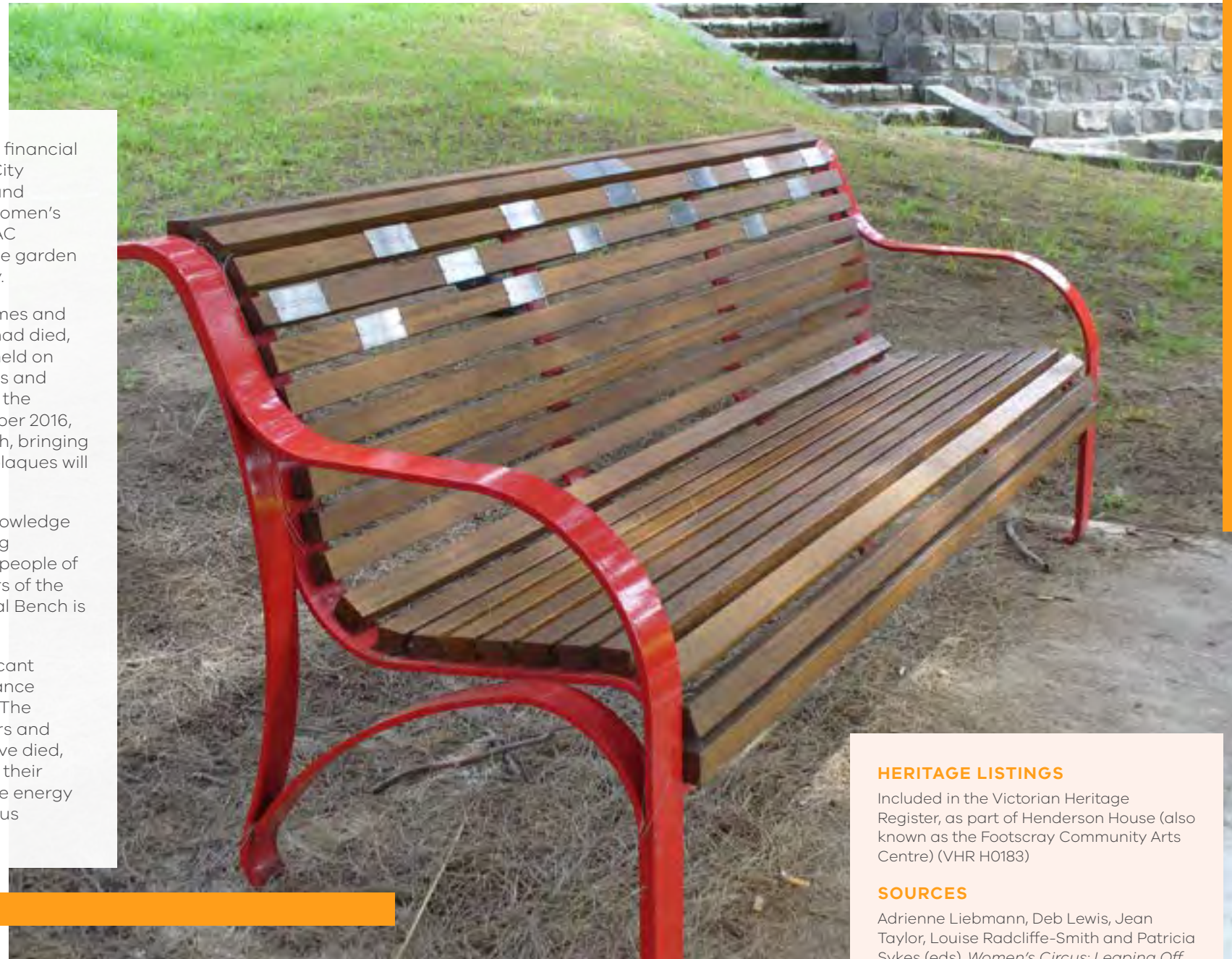
The idea for the Circus Women's Memorial Bench was conceived in February 2006, as a way of honouring the memory of all the womyn who took active and creative roles in both the Women's Circus and POW Circus, and who had since died.

With the support of the Women's Circus, financial assistance from both the Maribyrnong City Council and FCAC, and the agreement and support of the POW Circus, the Circus Women's Memorial Bench was installed in the FCAC grounds in 2010. The site overlooks a rose garden near the Maribyrnong River in Footscray.

Complete with plaques detailing the names and dates of fourteen circus members who had died, the bench was unveiled at a ceremony held on Saturday 4 December 2010. Many friends and family members were present to honour the occasion. In December 2012 and November 2016, further plaques were added to the bench, bringing the total to 22. As the years pass, more plaques will be added.

Another two plaques on the bench acknowledge the Wurundjeri people of the Woiwurrung language group and the Boon Wurrung people of the Kulin Nation as the traditional owners of the land where the Circus Women's Memorial Bench is located.

Many hundreds of womyn played significant roles in both the formation and continuance of the Women's Circus and POW Circus. The Circus Women's Memorial Bench honours and commemorates those members who have died, in order to remember and pay tribute to their considerable contributions, as well as the energy and expertise they gave to womyn's circus communities.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Victorian Heritage Register, as part of Henderson House (also known as the Footscray Community Arts Centre) (VHR H0183)

SOURCES

Adrienne Liebmann, Deb Lewis, Jean Taylor, Louise Radcliffe-Smith and Patricia Sykes (eds), *Women's Circus: Leaping Off the Edge*, Spinifex Press, North Melbourne, 1997.

Performing Older Women's Circus Facebook page.

Women's Circus, www.womenscircus.org.au, accessed 21 September 2020.

¹⁴ 'Womyn' is the spelling used by many of those involved in the bench project, referencing a strand of second-wave feminist language politics. See Jean Taylor, *Lesbians Ignite!: in Victoria in the 1990s*, Dyke Books Inc., Brunswick East, 2016.

Courage, 2014

WHITLAM PLACE, 209-217 NAPIER STREET, FITZROY

Located next to Fitzroy Town Hall in Whitlam Place, a small park, is a life-size bronze statue titled *Courage*, created by artist William Eicholtz. The sculpture draws inspiration from the character of the Cowardly Lion in *The Wizard of Oz* and is set on a 'dance floor' base that lights up like the yellow brick road. When it was unveiled in 2014 as part of the official cultural program of the 20th International AIDS Conference in Melbourne, then Mayor of the City of Yarra, Jackie Fristacky, said the artwork acknowledged the contribution of Yarra's sizeable LGBTIQ+ community. The sculpture is dedicated to the legacy of Ralph McLean, described as 'Australia's first openly gay elected official (City of Fitzroy, 1982) and Mayor (1984), an advocate for gay rights and social justice, and a champion of the arts'.¹⁵

Explaining his concept for the statue, Eicholtz noted:

The Cowardly Lion is a timeless hero ... Immediately recognisable as the iconic sissy, he is also a hero in search of courage. He is a symbol for all who struggle to find the courage to be who they are ... to find that courage that was inside themselves all along!¹⁶

The reference to *The Wizard of Oz* reflects the way in which many homosexual people took to the 1940 movie, embracing its star Judy Garland as a camp icon and referring to themselves as 'friends of Dorothy' (Garland's character). The movie's theme song 'Somewhere Over the Rainbow' provided part of the inspiration, many decades later, for the rainbow flag as a symbol for queer communities.

Public sculptures like *Courage*, which celebrate LGBTIQ+ history, are rarities in Australia and internationally. Those few that do exist have largely been created as memorials to those who died of HIV/AIDS related illness, rather than as celebrations of queer communities.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Heritage Overlay of the Yarra Planning Scheme (HO334 South Fitzroy Precinct)

SOURCES

'Courage, 2014', William Eicholtz, www.dishboydreaming.com/commissions_10.html, accessed 30 September 2020.

'Courage: the art of William Eicholtz', Creative Cowboy, <https://www.creativecowboyfilms.com/movies/courage-the-art-of-william-eicholtz>, accessed 21 September 2020.

'Courage', Yarra City Arts, <https://arts.yarracity.vic.gov.au/gallery/courage>, accessed 27 August 2020.

¹⁵ 'Courage', Yarra City Arts, <https://arts.yarracity.vic.gov.au/gallery/courage>, accessed 27 August 2020.

¹⁶ 'Courage, 2014', William Eicholtz, www.dishboydreaming.com/commissions_10.html, accessed 30 September 2020.

Trades Hall Plaques

VICTORIAN TRADES HALL, 54 VICTORIA STREET, CARLTON

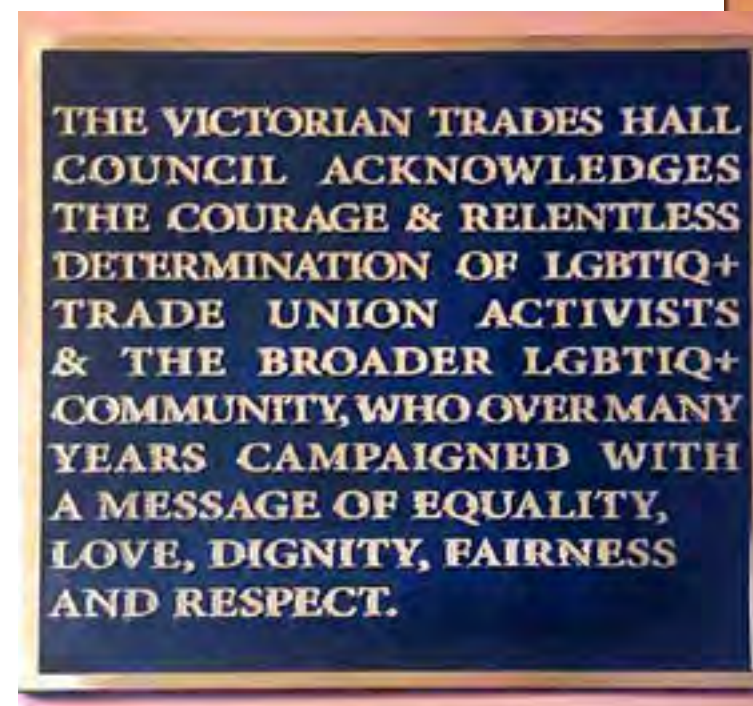
Trades Hall was built in 1859 and is one of the oldest trade union buildings in the world. It has been the central venue of the labour movement for 160 years and remains the headquarters of the Victorian Trades Hall Council (VTHC), as well as housing various trade union offices. The first phase of the construction of the building was designed by architectural firm Reed and Barnes. Joseph Reed designed many important public buildings in early Melbourne, including State Library Victoria and the Melbourne Town Hall. The building also holds specific meaning for queer communities as a reminder of the solidarity between union and LGBTIQ+ advocacy and activism.

LGBTIQ+ activists started to organise in their various unions in the mid-1970s and frequently found a receptive audience – notably the three Victorian teachers' unions, which in 1977 and 1978 adopted pro-gay policies in response to intense advocacy by the Gay Teachers and Students Group. In 1978 the first Gay and Lesbian Trade Unionists Group was formed out of Trades Hall to coordinate activism across the union movement in opposition to all forms of discrimination.

Australian unions played a vital role in the fight against HIV/AIDS, with the nurses' union taking the lead in educating its members, the hospital workforce and patients, as well as lobbying governments and the medical profession to take action. Tramways union members made panels for the **Australian AIDS Memorial Quilt Project** (see citation) in honour of their workmates and Trades Hall offered a room – which became known as the Quilt Room – where people could gather to make quilt panels for their loved ones.

Unions were major contributors to the campaign for marriage equality and VTHC coordinated the Victorian arm of the campaign for the 'Yes' vote, which was based at Trades Hall. Many union officials were seconded to the campaign. VTHC also designed and produced a large quantity of supporting material – most notably the 'Yes!' poster featured across Australian homes, businesses and community centres. Trades Hall was also the location of Australia's largest celebration of the result of the postal vote, in favour of marriage equality. To mark the occasion, the road outside Trades Hall was painted with a giant rainbow flag.

Two plaques erected at Trades Hall by VTHC Secretary Luke Hilakari after the successful 2017 marriage equality campaign recognise the long relationship between unionists and queer activism. The design of the plaques echoes the plaques celebrating the referenda of 1916 and 1917, in which unions campaigned and Australians voted to reject military conscription for World War I.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Victorian Heritage Register as part of Trades Hall (VHR H0663)

SOURCES

'Equality Resources', We Are Union, <https://www.weareunion.org.au/equality>, accessed 21 September 2020.

Liz Ross, 'From Homosexuals at Work to Union Pride' and 'The Peak Union Groups', in Graham Willett, Wayne Murdoch and Daniel Marshall (eds), *Secret Histories of Queer Melbourne*, Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives, Parkville, 2011, pp. 143-146, 147-148.

Thanks to Harriet Leadbetter and Wil Stracke for their assistance with this citation.



COMMUNITY HEALTH AND WELLBEING

AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND JOURNAL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Runway AUSTRALIAN JOURNAL OF PUBLIC HEALTH

The Survey and General Results

103 Sex in Australia: A guide for readers
Anthony MA, Smith, Chris E, Ross, Julie Ritchie, Andrew E, Grulich
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Anthony MA, Smith, Chris E. Ross, Julie Ritchie, Andrew E. Grulich
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Richard O. de Vries, Anthony MA, Smith, Chris E. Ross, Julie Ritchie
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and Julie Ritchie

111 Sex in Australia: Sexual difficulties in a representative sample of adults
Julie Ritchie, Andrew E. Grulich, Richard O. de Vries, Anthony MA, Smith
and Chris E. Ross

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Robert Storer, *A Survey of Sexual Life in Adolescence and Marriage*

RICHARD TRAVERS COLLECTION, MONASH UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

Robert Storer's *A Survey of Sexual Life in Adolescence and Marriage* (1932) is a remarkable book popularising and promoting the idea that bisexuality and homosexuality are a part of the normal range of human sexuality. It is historically and culturally important as one of the first texts published in Australia to do so, and it takes this idea further, presenting the 'homosexually inclined' as 'persons of taste, refinement and sensibility'.

Robert Vivian Storer (1900–1958) was an Australian doctor, sex educator and writer, who trained in Adelaide, London and Vienna specialising in venereology (sexually transmitted infections). He was the author in the late 1920s and 1930s of several books, aimed at the general public, on sex life, and was a founding consultant to the Australian Family Planning Association.

A Survey of Sexual Life in Adolescence and Marriage, illustrated and written for young people in plain language, was considered obscene by a New South Wales policeman who brought criminal charges against Storer. However, the magistrate who heard the case acquitted Storer, persuaded by a parade of medical experts and clergy. This was the first time that medical expertise had been used as evidence in an Australian case of this type and was to shape court procedure thereafter. Storer continued to publish his works on sex education for many years.

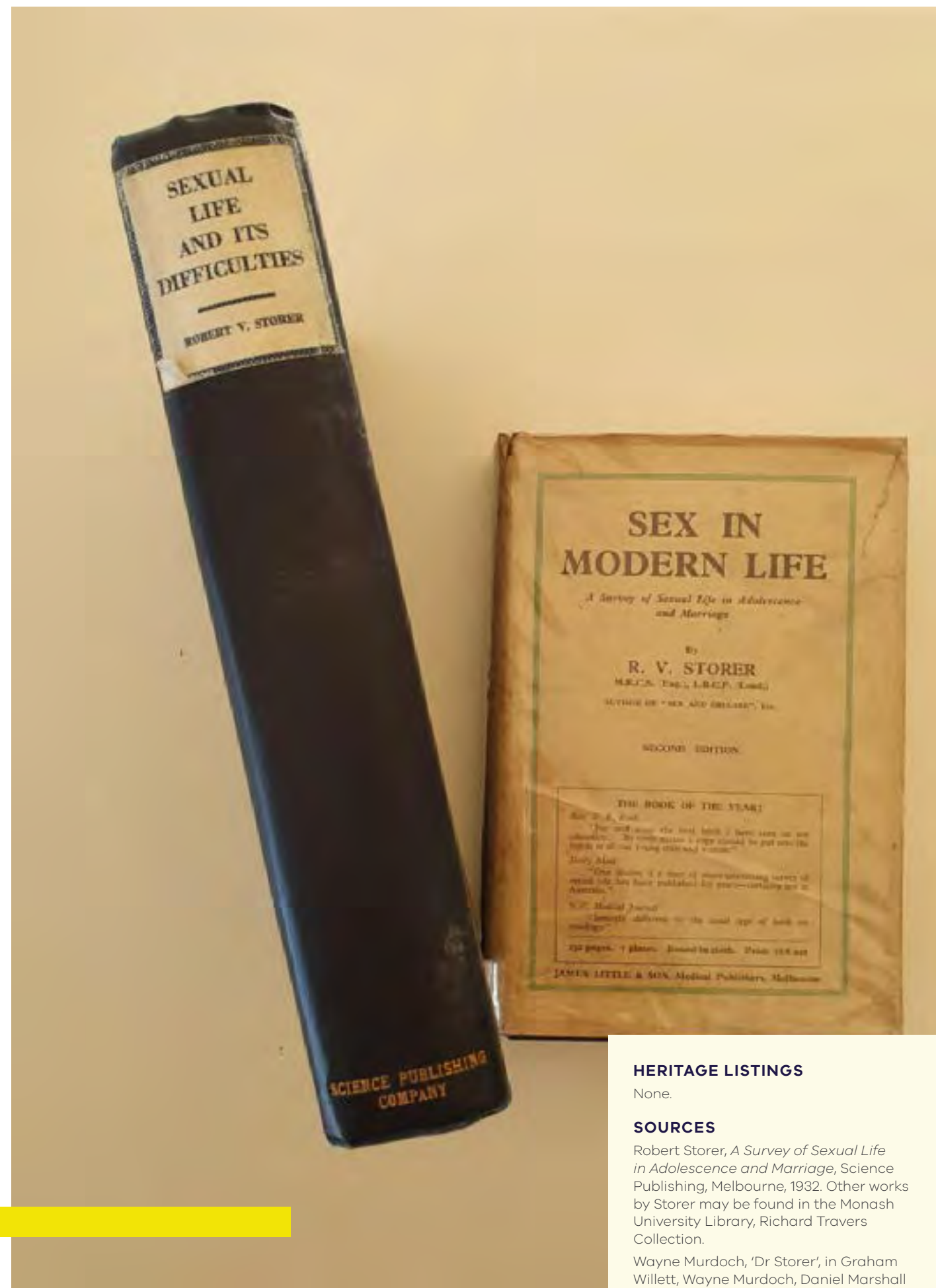
In addition to his books, Storer's personal life was also a target for condemnation. He was bisexual, and as one magistrate observed, this was obvious from his public writings. Certainly, Storer never seems to have concealed the fact of his own

sexuality, which kept both the police and the newspapers busy throughout the 1930s and into the 1940s.

Even if Storer had sought to keep his personal life private, he would have found this difficult. In 1942, he was in court – not for the first time – on sex charges; namely gross indecency with an 18-year-old militia soldier. The police presented evidence collected by spying through the keyhole of Storer's flat in Alcaston House in Spring Street, Melbourne. Storer protested that the case was a police set-up but was found guilty and received a nine-month jail sentence. In summing up the case, the judge commented that the soldier, who had worked with Storer since at least 1939, appeared to be 'quite a willing victim'.¹⁷

It is striking that for Storer, the medical models of homosexuality and bisexuality were not surrounded by condemnatory language or expressions of distaste. This puts him at odds with significant sections of the medical profession at the time and is indicative of the potential for the medical establishment to support sexual minorities in their struggle for equality. Because Storer's books were intended for wide audiences, it is likely that many LGBTIQ+ people would have sought them out, from progressive booksellers or in libraries, thereby helping to shape new understandings in society of the diversity of human sexual desire and identity.

Many of Storer's books are held in the Richard Travers Collection held by Monash University Library.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Robert Storer, *A Survey of Sexual Life in Adolescence and Marriage*, Science Publishing, Melbourne, 1932. Other works by Storer may be found in the Monash University Library, Richard Travers Collection.

Wayne Murdoch, 'Dr Storer', in Graham Willett, Wayne Murdoch, Daniel Marshall (eds), *Secret Histories of Queer Melbourne*, Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives, Parkville, 2011, pp. 49–51.

¹⁷ 'Storer's Dramatic Plea for Mercy', *Truth*, 5 July 1942.

The Red Ribbon

AUSTRALIAN QUEER ARCHIVES

The Red Ribbon is an object (of which there are now thousands in existence) worn pinned to a lapel or shirt to promote awareness of HIV/AIDS. The concept was created in New York by a group of artists involved in the Visual AIDS organisation in the early 1990s, and was brought to Australia by Melbourne's Brent Lacey, who made the first examples with a group of friends. Ever since Red Ribbons have been sold by volunteers, especially on World AIDS Day on 1 December, to raise money for the Victorian AIDS Council. The colour red was chosen for its association with blood, passion and, as in Valentine's Day hearts, love.

The emergence of HIV/AIDS in Australia in the early 1980s was marked by fear and discrimination, but also by a determination on the part of gay people and their friends – supported by governments and the medical establishment – to stop the spread of the virus and to care for those affected by it. Australia's response had a strong community-focus, and also incorporated initiatives to remind the wider world of the importance of HIV/AIDS, as well as to mourn and remember those who had died and to honour those living with the virus. These activities spoke to the human need to express and share common experiences. Many of these efforts, including the Red Ribbon, candlelight vigils, the **Australian AIDS Memorial Quilt Project** (see citation), education campaigns, care teams, formal and informal organisations and political protests, were inspired by similar initiatives in the United States.

Victoria's unique design for the ribbon was simpler than the American version, removing the loop and incorporating a safety pin, which is symbolic of the importance of safe sex in preventing HIV. The simple design of the ribbon meant that it could be produced easily and cheaply. In 1992, the Red Ribbon appeared at the AFL Grand Final, in the retail outlets of The Body Shop and, in a larger format, tied to lampposts in central Melbourne.

From the earliest days of the Red Ribbon project in Victoria, the ribbons have been made by volunteers at Thorne Harbour Health (formerly the Victorian AIDS Council), reflecting the great extent to which the community's response to AIDS has been carried out by grassroots volunteers.

The hope and intention for the future of the Red Ribbon is that when the fight against AIDS has been won, the ribbon can be turned upside down to form a 'V' for victory.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Fiona Poulton, Lucy Bracey and Katherine Sheedy, *Under the Red Ribbon: Thirty Years of the Victorian AIDS Council / Gay Men's Health Centre*, Victorian AIDS Council/Gay Men's Health Centre, South Yarra, 2013.

Positive Living Centre

46 ACLAND STREET, ST KILDA AND 51 COMMERCIAL ROAD, SOUTH YARRA

The Positive Living Centre (PLC) has provided a vibrant and safe environment for all people living with HIV since 1993. It enhances the health and well-being of HIV positive people, through the provision of social, emotional, recreational, and skills-based services and activities. It is emblematic of Australian community led responses to HIV/AIDS.

The AIDS epidemic arrived in Australia in the early 1980s. The gay community, the federal government and sections of the medical establishment almost immediately set about forming a partnership to respond to the threat. For the first few years, it was gay men who spoke for people with AIDS and staffed the state AIDS councils, though the call for volunteers brought friends and allies (lesbians, trans people, straight women and men) to perform the myriad activities that were needed. But by 1988 there was a sense among people with AIDS they needed to take the lead. At the Third National AIDS Conference in Hobart that year, a group of HIV-positive people took to the stage to openly declare their positive status. This powerful act provided the spark for them to organise and become more visible.

The establishment of People Living With AIDS, a program within the Victorian AIDS Council, was followed quickly by the search for a home. The significance of this was summed up by one activist, who described their vision for the facility as:

... a friendly place where people with HIV could drop in, chat about the latest treatments, trying to reduce some of the stigma they were feeling, some of the hopelessness they were feeling.¹⁸

The quest for a suitable location was long. The plan to establish a centre for people living with AIDS on a site in Caulfield provoked furious resistance from local residents, to which the local council bowed. Finally, an appropriate building was found at 46 Acland Street, St Kilda. The facility was officially opened by the Mayor of St Kilda on 18 April 1993 in a celebration that involved hundreds of people, champagne and balloons.

The name for the Positive Living Centre was chosen as a deliberate play on words to counter the stigmatising image of people living with AIDS as victims. The centre continues to play a vital role in the lives of HIV positive people. Staff and volunteers work on policy, education and advocacy around HIV/AIDS, and the centre provides counselling services, food deliveries and other welfare services to those in need, as well as spaces for therapy groups to meet. Regular outings and drop-in sessions help to relieve the social isolation that some people with HIV/AIDS experience.

In 2002 the Positive Living Centre moved to the former Braille Library at 51 Commercial Road, Prahran. It is a large, bright welcoming premises for staff, volunteers and people living with HIV/AIDS, and remains a central point of connection and support for the community.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

46 Acland Street is included in the Heritage Overlay of the Port Phillip Planning Scheme (HO5 St Kilda Hill)

51 Commercial Road, South Yarra is included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR H1926)

SOURCES

Fiona Poulton, Lucy Bracey and Katherine Sheedy, *Under the Red Ribbon: Thirty Years of the Victorian AIDS Council / Gay Men's Health Centre*, Victorian AIDS Council/Gay Men's Health Centre, South Yarra, 2013.

¹⁸ Cited in Fiona Poulton, Lucy Bracey and Katherine Sheedy, *Under the Red Ribbon: Thirty Years of the Victorian AIDS Council / Gay Men's Health Centre*, Victorian AIDS Council / Gay Men's Health Centre, South Yarra, 2013, p. 39.

‘Sex in Australia: The Australian Study of Health and Relationships’

**AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND
JOURNAL OF PUBLIC HEALTH, VOL. 27,
NO. 2, 2003**

'Sex in Australia' is a special issue of the *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health* reporting on the Australian Study of Health and Relationships (ASHR), which has historical significance as the largest survey of Australians' sexual behaviour and ideas ever conducted.

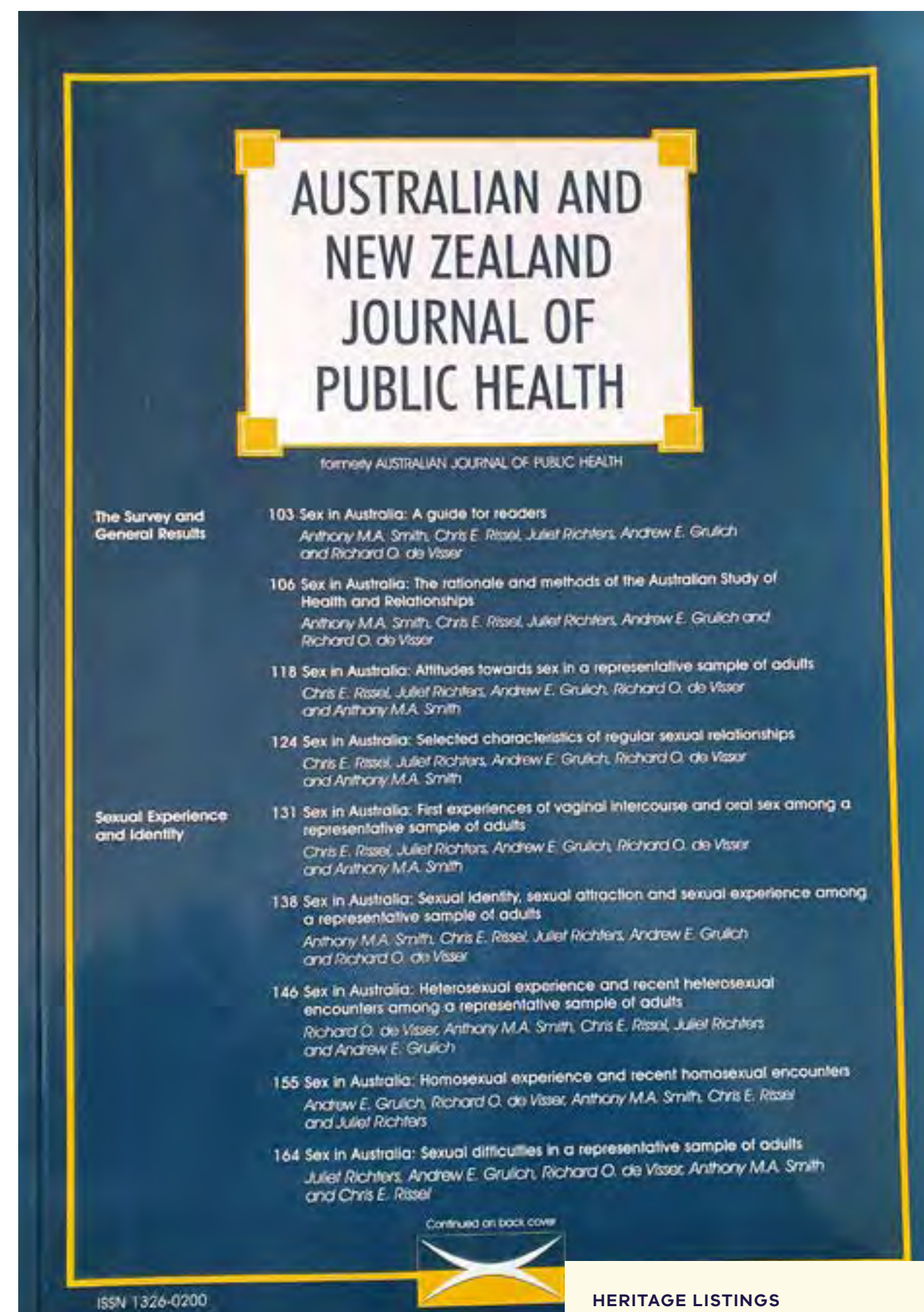
It can be challenging to access the reality of queer lives, and especially sex lives, in Victorian history. Insights can be gleaned from court records, literary representations and, after the 1970s, from LGBTIQ+ publications and oral histories. But it is difficult to draw definitive conclusions from this sort of material.

Research into sexual behaviour took a great leap forward with the emergence of AIDS in the early 1980s. It became urgently necessary to examine

sexual behaviour and how people felt about it, in order to develop strategies that could effectively promote safe sex practices. Importantly, the ASHR survey, led by La Trobe University's Australian Research Centre in Sex Health and Society (ARCSHS), looked well beyond gay men and men who have sex with men, to all forms of sexual identity and behaviour. Largely on the basis of this research program, ARCSHS became popularly known as 'the Australian Kinsey Institute', referring to the influential American sex research organisation.

The survey was conducted between May 2001 and June 2002 with 19,307 people between 16 and 59 years of age. Conducted by telephone, it collected and analysed personal and socio-economic demographic data, as well as responses to questions about sexual behaviour, sexual and emotional satisfaction, first sexual experiences, contraception, reproduction, and sexually transmitted infections. The special issue contains twenty articles reporting on the survey, featuring over 100 pages of data displayed in tables and charts, alongside detailed discussions about the results.

Of particular, enduring significance for queer communities is the snapshot that the ASHR provides of the social reality of LGBTIQ+ lives at that moment in Australian history. Issues of identity, attraction and experience were placed front and centre, and continue to inform ARCSHS's contributions to public policy and community understandings relating to sexual health and behaviour today.



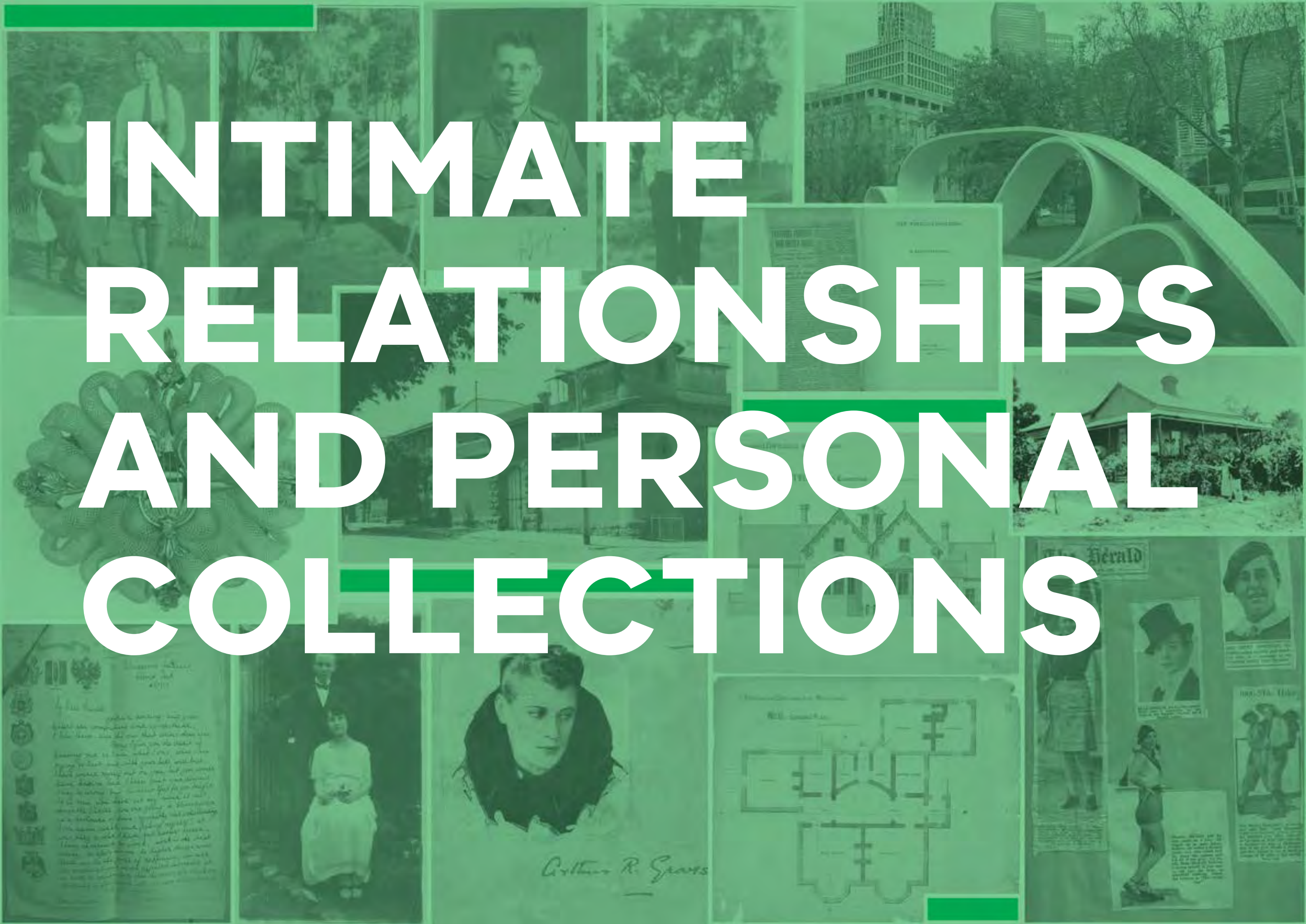
HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health, Vol. 27, No. 2, 2003.

Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, www.latrobe.edu.au/arcs/hs/publications, accessed 21 September 2020.



INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS AND PERSONAL COLLECTIONS

Coriyule and Mourning Brooch

1-69 MCDERMOTT ROAD, CURLEWIS (CORIYULE), STATE LIBRARY VICTORIA (BROOCH)

Anne Drysdale and Caroline Newcomb occupy a special, albeit contested, place in Victorian history. Their house, Coriyule, is located in Curlewis near Geelong in south-western Victoria. The mourning brooch that was commissioned by Newcomb following Drysdale's death in 1853 is preserved in the collection of State Library Victoria. Coriyule and the mourning brooch have additional meaning in relation to queer history because they draw attention to lives that cannot be conveniently labelled. These items provide evidence of a particular emotional intimacy between two women in nineteenth-century Victoria, and serve as vivid reminders that the past is not easily understood through the lens of contemporary identities.

Drysdale and Newcomb were business partners in a pastoral and agricultural enterprise, taking up land near Geelong in 1843. Initially, they lived together in a small cottage in Boronggoop, until they had Coriyule built in 1849. From Drysdale's diaries it is clear that they were in each other's lives on a daily basis.

Drysdale wrote of Newcomb:

Miss Newcomb who is my partner, I hope, for life is the best & most clever person I have ever met with. There seems to be magic in her touch, everything she does is done so well & so quickly.¹⁹

The intimacy of the relationship is strongly reflected in the mourning brooch, which is a remarkable example of the upper-class Victorian-era tradition of marking the passing of a loved one with the creation of a piece of jewellery. In this particular example, the brooch was fashioned from the fine strands of entwined hair of both Drysdale and Newcomb, and includes gold decorative elements.

The two women did not conform to prevailing gender norms – the 'lady squatters' were much commented on in their lifetime. According to Bev Roberts, who has edited Drysdale's diaries:

the most apposite characterisation of the relationship is in the words of Mrs Craik [a popular contemporary novelist] 'loving, sustaining and comforting one another, with a tenderness often closer than that of sisters'.²⁰

It would be wrong to call Drysdale and Newcomb lesbians, and for the most part historians have been careful not to do so. This is a modern identity and a label that the women were unlikely to have heard, much less associated with themselves. But they were clearly more than business partners or two women who just happened to live together. They were emotionally connected, and their lives were deeply entangled, intimate and unconventional. They were, if nothing else, brave in their open commitment to each other at that time.

Following Drysdale's death, Newcomb married a man – 'to universal astonishment', according to Roberts. Yet when Newcomb died in 1874, she was buried with Drysdale at Coriyule. The homestead and the mourning brooch, which is with Anne Drysdale's diaries in the collection of the State Library Victoria, are powerful representations of an intimate relationship between women and provide rare insight into queer lives of the nineteenth century.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Coriyule Homestead is included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR H0272). The brooch has no heritage listing.

SOURCES

Bev Roberts, 'A Black Apron View of History: Anne Drysdale & Caroline Newcomb, Victoria's "Lady Squatters"', *La Trobeana: Journal of the C. J. La Trobe Society Inc.*, Vol. 9, No. 3, November 2010, pp. 2-16.

Bev Roberts, *Miss D and Miss N: An Extraordinary Partnership*, Australian Scholarly Publishing in association with State Library Victoria, Melbourne, 2009.

'Coriyule Homestead', Victorian Heritage Database, <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/342>, accessed 31 August 2020.

¹⁹ Cited in Bev Roberts, *Miss D and Miss N: An extraordinary partnership*, Australian Scholarly Publishing in association with State Library Victoria, Melbourne, 2009, p. 22.

²⁰ Bev Roberts, 'Miss Newcomb's Teapot' in Graham Willett and John Arnold (eds), 'Queen City of the South: Gay and Lesbian Melbourne', *La Trobe Journal*, May 2011, p. 85.

Former Ballarat Gaol and Courthouse

107 LYDIARD STREET SOUTH, BALLARAT

The former Ballarat Gaol (1856) and Courthouse (1868) are now part of Federation University's SMB Campus (formerly the School of Mines Ballarat). The buildings reflect many stories relating to crime and the law in early Ballarat, but they are also strongly connected to a story that is of particular meaning to queer communities.

They are one of many places connected to the life and career of the bushranger Andrew George Scott (1842–1880), otherwise known as Captain Moonlite. After leaving Ireland, where he was born, Scott spent some years in New Zealand and the United States, before finally arriving in Victoria where he practiced for a time as a lay preacher in Bacchus Marsh. He lived in Mt Egerton, where he staged his first robbery. He was later a prisoner in Pentridge Gaol, where in 1875 he met James Nesbitt.

Scott rocketed to fame after his escape from Ballarat Gaol in 1872. Escape from the building – with its towering outer walls and its panopticon design, which ensured that all prisoners could be kept under watch at all times – was said to be impossible. Even the respectable press was driven to admire Scott's genius and his leadership of the band of fellow prisoners that he led to (brief) freedom. He had already attracted the attention of the press and the public with the skilful conduct of his own defence during his trial for robbery at the Ballarat Courthouse. Scott's forensic demolition of the evidence against him and his two-hour closing statement to the jury were much admired.

In 1879, after they had completed their sentences, Scott and Nesbitt lived together in Fitzroy. There

is evidence from earlier in Scott's life that he was attracted to younger, good-looking men, but when it comes to his relationship with Nesbitt there is today little doubt that their relationship was intimate.

They were inseparable from the time they met in Pentridge. Scott campaigned throughout Victoria for prison reform but soon decided that bushranging – under the name of Captain Moonlite – was the only way out of his financial difficulties.

Nesbitt joined his gang without hesitation. When Nesbitt was killed in a shoot-out with police at Wantabadgery Station in New South Wales, Scott fell weeping on the body before he was arrested, charged and condemned to death. In prison he continued to wear a ring made of Nesbitt's hair. He wrote that they were 'one heart and soul' and specified in his will that they should be buried in the one grave.²¹

Scott's wish was finally fulfilled one hundred years later, when his body was reinterred in the Gundagai cemetery, near Nesbitt's unmarked grave.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

The Former Ballarat Gaol and Courthouse is included in the Victorian Heritage Register as part of the Ballarat School of Mines (now Federation University Australia) (VHR H1463).

SOURCES

'Ballarat School of Mines', Victorian Heritage Database, <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/77>, accessed 1 September 2020.

Garry Wotherspoon, 'Moonlight and ... Romance? The Death-Cell Letters of Captain Moonlight and Some of their Implications', *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, Vol. 78, 1992, pp. 76–91.

Paul Terry, *In Search of Captain Moonlite: The Strange Life and Death of the Notorious Bushranger*, Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, 2013.

²¹ Cited in Garry Wotherspoon, 'Moonlight and ... Romance? The Death-Cell Letters of Captain Moonlight and Some of their Implications', *Journal of the Royal Australian Historical Society*, Vol. 78, 1992, pp. 76–91.

The Steyne

85 A'BECKETT ROAD, UPPER BEACONSFIELD

The Steyne (later Newstead Forest) was the country home of Harriet Elphinstone Dick and her partner Alice Moon. They acquired 40 acres outside Melbourne at Upper Beaconsfield, where they built a cottage and lived from 1884 until 1888.

The two women were in their twenties when they arrived in Australia from England in 1876. Elphinstone Dick was a champion swimmer, and a celebrity in both Britain and Melbourne. In 1879, after her retirement from swimming, she and Moon opened The Ladies' Gymnasium; one of the earliest in Melbourne and certainly the first for women. There they showcased the new sport of callisthenics to Australia. The Ladies' Gymnasium moved between a number of locations in the centre of Melbourne, before settling in the grand Victoria Building on Swanston Street (later City Square).

The two women were unquestionably a couple, as biographer Sue Ingleton has demonstrated in her examination of their lives.

Today we would describe them as feminists, but at the time a feminist was referred to as the 'New Woman'. She was independent, career-minded, professional, often rejected marriage, and was dedicated to, among other things, clothing reform for women.

This involved shedding the tight corsets that were commonly worn by women at the time in favour of a looser, more comfortable style of dress. Moon ran an organic poultry farm on the land in Upper Beaconsfield, while Elphinstone Dick travelled to Melbourne every day to teach callisthenics to young women. They were known by their neighbours as 'the Amazons', referring to the tribe of women warriors in the ancient world.

In 1888, the women sold their farm and Moon established a restaurant in Little Collins Street, Melbourne. However, Moon was restless, and her affections had drifted. In 1890, she broke off the relationship and moved to Sydney to become a journalist. Elphinstone Dick was devastated.

The relationship is not well documented in diaries or letters. But there are hints from a few distant family members and traces in sporting clubs and newspaper reports. Ingleton's biography is subtitled 'an imagined history'. But Moon and Elphinstone Dick were certainly intimate companions and were deeply emotionally attached to each other. They were strongly committed to their own careers and to supporting each other's aspirations. The intimacy of the relationship is clear and is strongly reflected in The Steyne – the home they shared for four years.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Sue Ingleton, *Making Trouble (Tongued with Fire): An Imagined History of Harriet Elphinstone Dick and Alice C Moon*, Spinifex Press, North Geelong, 2019.

Wayne Murdoch, 'Harriet Elphinstone Dick and the "New Women"', in Graham Willett, Wayne Murdoch and Daniel Marshall (eds), *Secret Histories of Queer Melbourne*, Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives, Parkville, 2011, pp. 27-29.

Love Letters between Harry Bruin and Ben Morris

CRIMINAL TRIAL BRIEFS AND REGISTERS (1841–1943), PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE VICTORIA

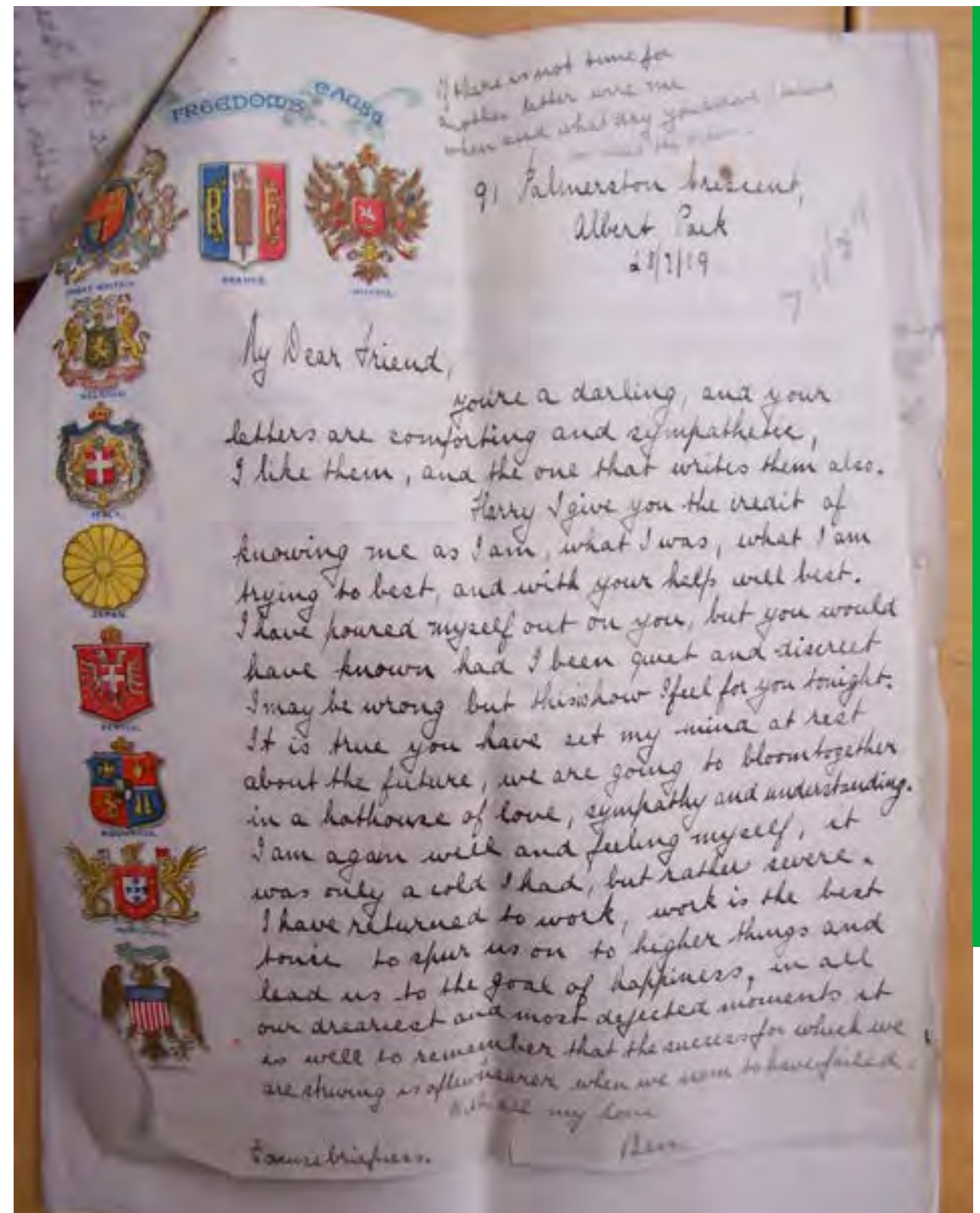
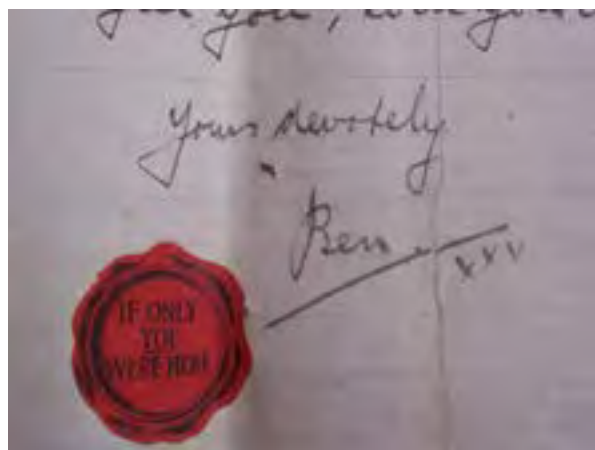
This collection of approximately 20 letters between Melbourne men Ben Morris and Harry Bruin, covering a period of several months in 1919, consists of original letters handwritten by Morris and carbon copies of Bruin's replies.

Love letters between men from this period are extremely rare in an Australian context, and globally. They were seized by police from Bruin's home in Harcourt Street, Auburn in October 1919. The police were investigating a report that Bruin and Morris were conducting an intimate affair.

The relationship came to light when the mother of one of Morris's friends, having failed in her attempt to blackmail Bruin, went to the police. Blackmail was an ever-present danger to homosexual men at that time. Homosexual sex was against the law and even gossip alone could ruin reputations, careers and social standing. In refusing the demands of his attempted blackmailer, Bruin took an enormous risk. However, Morris and Bruin were lucky that their letters contained no descriptions of sex acts. It was not illegal to express love for a person of the same sex and when the matter came before the court, the police had no choice but to let the matter drop without laying charges.

Letters like these are rare as potentially incriminating correspondence between men was usually destroyed by the writers or the recipients, to prevent it falling into the hands of the authorities, blackmailers, or disapproving third parties. These letters survived only because they were seized by the authorities for the purpose of prosecution.

Morris and Bruin's letters are also important because, together with the statements taken from the two men and others involved in the case by police prosecutors, they provide insight into the development of the liaison over an extended period. The emotional letters provide rare evidence of a deep romantic affection between two men in their own words.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

R v Bruin and Morris, Criminal Trial Briefs and Registers (1841–1943), VPRS 30/PO, Unit 1877 1920/100, Public Record Office Victoria.

Wayne Murdoch, *Kamp Melbourne in the 1920s and '30s: Trade, Queens and Inverts*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK, 2017.

Arthur Groves's Book of Verse

AUSTRALIAN QUEER ARCHIVES

This small, A5-size hand-bound volume contains 58 pages of hand-written poems dated between 1906 and 1919. An envelope is attached to the cover, bearing a 1½ penny stamp and addressed to Mr Stuart Hunter, Box 19, Lakes Entrance. Inside is the inscription: 'To my friend / from his friend / the Author of / these Verses / London 1920'. The volume was acquired by the Australian Queer Archives after being found in an antiquarian bookshop in Melbourne.

Arthur Groves's book of verse is an intriguing object. The poems are not explicitly homosexual, but they do suggest that the author and his friend were intimate. The word 'friend' was common in the early twentieth century as an expression of male-male intimacy. With the book of verse is a photographic portrait of the author, Arthur R Groves. The tilt of his head to his left and the demure sideways and downward glance of his eyes is more typical of a feminine pose in that era than a masculine one. Moreover, it appears that Groves's eyebrows are shaped, his hair permed, and his lips rouged.

The poems themselves span a variety of genres, including wartime and post-war life, comedy, and love. In Groves's love poems, the character of Love is personified as male, such as in the lines: 'Love came with splendour and a sweet surprise, / And took my hand in his, and stole away / My heart with his unfathomable eyes'.

Researchers have managed to find out more about Stuart Hunter by examining his will, death certificate, and his work history. As for Groves, he was in South America from 1909 to 1912, and England thereafter. His war poems suggest that he was in France during World War I, but no further traces of him have yet been found.

The full story of Groves's book of verse may never be uncovered, but understandings of early twentieth-century modes of sexuality do suggest that this volume of poetry, including love poems written and sent from one man to another, is evidence of a romance between two men. Groves's book of verse therefore provides rare and meaningful insight into a queer relationship in the early twentieth century.



Arthur R. Groves

HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Graham Willett, 'To My Friend from his Friend', in Chris Brickell and Judith Collard (eds), *Queer Objects*, Otago University Press, Dunedin, New Zealand, 2019, pp. 250-255.

Radclyffe Hall, *The Well of Loneliness*

STATE LIBRARY VICTORIA

The Well of Loneliness is a novel by British writer Radclyffe Hall that was published in the United Kingdom in 1928. Both acclaimed and reviled by critics and readers at the time of its publication, the book tells the story of Stephen Gordon, an upper-class woman described as an 'invert', and her affair with a woman named Mary. It is a story about the discrimination suffered by the protagonists, who experience social rejection and vilification due to their relationship. It dwells on the self-loathing that the characters feel about their sexual desires. The novel was banned in the United Kingdom almost as soon as it appeared, after a sensational trial in the British courts resulted in the book being deemed as obscene. However, it was immediately published in the United States and in France, where it attracted enormous sales. The State Library of Victoria holds a first edition.

The importance of *The Well of Loneliness* to Victorian LGBTIQ+ history is illustrated in the life of Melbourne woman Dorothy Jean Ross (1891–1982; known as DJ to her friends). In 1929, Ross returned to Australia from Europe, smuggling with her a copy of *The Well of Loneliness*. Despite the fact that the book was banned in Australia, Ross lent it to friends. One of these friends was Barbara Falk (1910–2008), who in 2000 published a biography of Ross.

In 1930 Ross formed what Falk described as 'an intimate friendship' with Mary Davis, a former student. According to Falk, the relationship was based on 'a mutual erotic attraction' and a 'mutual love'. It was obvious to many that Ross and Davis were more than colleagues, sharing an intensely affectionate personal relationship. The women shared holidays, attended concerts, plays and social occasions together and lived together later in life. In her biography of Ross, Falk describes other similar relationships between professional, middle-class women in Australia during that period.

Both Hall's novel and Ross's life, as chronicled by Falk, provide remarkable insight into the lives and experiences of women who loved women in the early twentieth century.

At a time when public discourse provided few resources to describe romance or sexual attraction between women, queer women smuggled books like *The Well of Loneliness* into Victoria and circulated them amongst themselves. The presence of a first edition of Hall's novel in State Library Victoria reminds us of the resourcefulness of LGBTIQ+ people in the past, and their access to ideas about sexuality and identity that were circulating internationally at that time.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Radclyffe Hall, *The Well of Loneliness/With a commentary by Havelock Ellis*, Pegasus Press, Paris [1928].

Barbara Falk with Cecile Trioli, *D.J.: Dorothy Jean Ross, 1891-1982*, Melbourne University Press, Carlton South, 2000.

Sally Cline, *Radclyffe Hall: A Woman called John*, Overlook Press, New York, 1999.

Monte Punshon's Scrapbooks

AUSTRALIAN QUEER ARCHIVES

These scrapbooks in the collection of the Australian Queer Archives were compiled by Ethel May (Monte) Punshon (1882–1989). They are filled with clippings (almost all undated) from newspapers and magazines. One contains clippings from English and Japanese-language press about Japanese issues. In the other, articles and pictures depict women who lived lives that did not conform to the gender norms of their time, including women farmers, motorists, pilots, sportswomen, a male impersonator, women who dressed and lived as men, 'Conchita, a bull-fighting beauty', a jockey, a body-building wrestler, sailors and a pirate. There is one artfully posed nude photograph. The scrapbooks were acquired by AQUA after Punshon's death in 1989.

Punshon was born in Ballarat and lived most of her life in Melbourne, with sojourns in Japan and the New Hebrides (now Vanuatu). During World War II, Punshon's Japanese language skills saw her employed at the prisoner-of-war camp in Tatura, north of Melbourne. Her presence there is recorded in the Tatura World War II Internment and POW Camps Collection.

In 1982, at the age of 100, Punshon was taken to visit Pennies, the lesbian night held at the **Prince of Wales Hotel** in St Kilda (see citation). Almost immediately she became something of a celebrity, often referred to as 'the world's oldest lesbian'. Although Punshon did not use the word 'lesbian', in conversations with friends and in newspaper interviews she was clear that she was attracted to women. The great love of her life was Debbie, with whom she shared a house in the 1910s. Following her breakup with Debbie, Punshon was consoled by a group of men she described as her 'homosexual men friends'.²²

Without public affirmation of Punshon's sexuality, we would have been left to speculate about her life, drawing on her scrapbooks to understand the woman who created them.

Punshon's scrapbooks are meaningful because they offer a unique insight into the private world of a woman whose life spanned much of the twentieth century. The scrapbooks point, too, to the ways in which mainstream information was repurposed to serve Punshon's interests – an experience that many kamp women and men had in the days before LGBTIQ+ people were free to be more visible.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Ruth Ford, Lyned Isaac and Rebecca Jones, *Forbidden love – bold passion: lesbian stories 1900s to 1990s exhibition catalogue*, History Inverted, North Fitzroy, 1996.

Tatura World War II Internment and POW Camps Collection, Tatura Irrigation and Wartime Camps Museum, Tatura, Victorian Heritage Register H2373.

²² 'Monte', in Ruth Ford, Lyned Isaac and Rebecca Jones, *Forbidden love – bold passion: lesbian stories 1900s to 1990s exhibition catalogue*, History Inverted, North Fitzroy, 1996, p. 7.

McCrakett Family Photographs

AUSTRALIAN QUEER ARCHIVES

This small collection of five family photographs, and an accompanying oral history interview, throw significant light upon ways – usually shrouded in privacy – in which LGBTIQ+ dynamics could play out in family lives in the past.

The photographs were donated to the Australian Queer Archives by Moya Palmer, who found them when helping to pack up the family home after the death of her father, Jim McCraket (1898–1975). The photographs are of Jim and his sister Rita cross-dressing; Jim and his wife Marj; and three photographs of Roy Saunders, who Rita was engaged to.

Moya was interviewed by AQUA when she donated the photographs to the archive, and her interview is also held in the collection. The details provided in Moya's oral history interview enable us to understand the collection, and the lives of all four people depicted, in a way that is particularly meaningful for LGBTIQ+ communities.

Moya revealed in her interview that from the late 1920s to the end of his life, Jim always wore a dress and pearls when he was at home. He also wore a brooch and a band around his head to conceal his baldness. Moya remembers Jim's sister Rita often wore jodhpurs, which were not, as she says, common dress for women at that time except when horse riding.

Rita was engaged for an extended period to Roy Saunders. But it became clear to Moya, as she grew up, that it was the relationship between Jim and Roy that was the more intense. When Roy came to visit, Jim's face would light up and the two of them would retire to Jim's studio, leaving Marj and Rita to their own devices. Before Jim was affected by agoraphobia in about 1940, after which he never left the house again, he and Roy would ride their bicycles to a shack in Diamond Creek, where they would spend weekends taking photographs.

Jim's cross-dressing did not seem to bother Marj too much but his relationship with Roy was another matter. She never hid her dislike of Roy and never invited him to eat with them. When she and Jim married, Marj refused to have Roy, then Rita's fiancé, at the wedding. Roy turned up anyway, grief stricken and weeping openly. He then disappeared from the family's story.

Families often have histories half-hidden from the wider world, and which do not neatly fit into conventional narratives. Many of those histories are part of Victoria's queer heritage. This collection of photographs, and accompanying interview, provide unusual access to one such story.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Moya Palmer interviewed by Kathy Sport and Gary Jaynes, 25 June 2018, AQUA

The Great Petition and Women's Suffrage Petition

BURSTON RESERVE AND PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE VICTORIA

The Great Petition is a twenty-metre steel and bluestone sculpture designed by Susan Hewitt and Penelope Lee, located in Melbourne's Burston Reserve near the Victorian State Parliament. It celebrates the 1891 Women's Suffrage Petition and the hard-fought struggle for women's right to vote in Victoria. Containing some 30,000 signatures, the 1891 petition was dubbed the 'Monster Petition' and is now held by Public Record Office Victoria. Victorian women's right to vote was won in 1908, and the sculpture was unveiled in 2008 to mark the centenary of the momentous win for women's rights. The women's suffrage movement in Victoria was joined by many women over decades and transformed the lives of those involved, often profoundly.

Same-sex attracted women played an important role in the suffrage campaign, and the independence they won was a significant precursor to second wave feminism and the lesbian movements of the 1970s.

One of the signatories of the petition which is memorialised by the sculpture was Mary Fullerton. Fullerton was born in 1868 in Gippsland and published her first book of sonnets in her early twenties. She was active in the women's rights movement, advocating for the vote, marriage and divorce equality, and inheritance rights. In 1910, while campaigning to have prominent feminist and suffragist Vida Goldstein elected to the State parliament, Fullerton met Mabel Singleton. They soon became friends, and the relationship grew more intimate. They lived together, raising Singleton's son, from 1922 until Fullerton's death in 1946.

Between 1910 and 1922, Fullerton wrote some 100 poems reflecting on the relationship and her love for Singleton, who she described as 'the beloved, immediate friend / The chosen of my heart'. The poems are intimate and passionate, describing bodies that, according to biographer Sylvia Martin, 'pulse, throb, breathe, blossom, spill and flow'. They are expressions of a profound physical and emotional attachment. The 1891 petition and its sculpture reflect the stories of the thousands of Victorians who supported women's right to vote, and the passions between women that were forged in the struggle for women's rights.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

The Great Petition sculpture (2008) at Burston Reserve, Melbourne is not heritage listed.

The Women's Suffrage Petition (1891) is included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR H2121) and is held at the Public Record Office Victoria (PROV)

SOURCES

Sylvia Martin, *Passionate Friends: Mary Fullerton, Mabel Singleton and Miles Franklin*, Onlywomen, London, 2001.

The Great Petition (sculpture), Susan Hewitt and Penelope Lee, City of Melbourne Art and Heritage Collection, Burston Reserve, East Melbourne.

Women's Suffrage Petition 1891, Original Papers Tabled in the Legislative Assembly, VPRS 3253/PO, Unit 851, Public Record Office Victoria.



PRECINCTS AND ARCHIVAL COLLECTIONS

St Kilda Precinct

ST KILDA

St Kilda began as a genteel sea-side village and was settled from the 1840s onwards. It was known as a holiday destination. The tourist economy was at its peak from 1888 to 1929 and amenities for day or weekend visitors expanded rapidly. In the early twentieth century prominent sites were opened: Luna Park (1912), the Palais de Danse (1913), the Palais Theatre (1927), and ever more sea baths, including the Moorish-style baths (1928).

In the mid-twentieth century, St Kilda transformed gradually from a haven for the wealthy, to a place of great importance for many who were treated as outcasts by the mainstream, including sex-workers, drug users, and LGBTIQ+ people and is now gentrifying again. Over time St Kilda has seen a variety of different venues, events and activities that have been particularly meaningful to LGBTIQ+ communities.

St Kilda Sea Baths

In the early twentieth century, there were a number of sea baths along the foreshore at St Kilda. Harriet Elphinstone Dick (see **The Steyne**) made a name for herself as a champion swimmer and trainer. She showed that swimming was a sport open to women, and a way for them to demonstrate physical skills and prowess and to defy gendered social expectations. The baths were popular with both women and men and, because the baths were sex-segregated men usually swam naked. There is considerable evidence of the way which this facilitated sexual encounters.

Arts Balls

As a popular entertainment precinct, St Kilda hosted Arts Balls for decades, beginning in the 1920s. Over the years, they were staged at the San Remo Ballroom, the Plaza, the Palais de Danse (all lost now) and the St Kilda Town Hall. These were annual gatherings of Melbourne's elite, in part a chance to raise money for worthy causes, but mostly a chance to dress up: in fine evening gowns, black tie, or in flamboyant, theatrical, cross-dressing kamp style. On one occasion, the costumes of a group of ball attendees were said to be so elaborate that a truck was needed to transport them to the event.



Social clubs

The **Prince of Wales Hotel**, an art deco masterpiece of the 1930s, has long been a place for kamp people to gather. During World War II, American military personnel were housed there, to the delight of the regular patrons. In the late 1970s and throughout the 1980s, Pokeys provided extravagant drag shows and disco dancing, and Pennies was a regular venue for lesbian socialising.

Checkmates was a social club open to women and men. It organised social events (for example at the Stardust Lounge on the Lower Esplanade in St Kilda), fundraising raffles, car rallies, barbeques, and picnics. The organisation is remembered most for its dances and parties held on occasions including Melbourne Cup Eve, New Year's Eve, and Anzac Day Eve. A mini-Arts Ball was held by Checkmates at the Stardust Rooms in St Kilda.

In 1980, **Mandate** opened in St Kilda. It was Melbourne's first gay-owned, gay-staffed nightclub to be open six nights a week. Police and local government were hostile, but the venue lasted for a decade. Its original decor was a prison-bar motif, indicative of the strongly masculine style of the time that was fashionable to a sizable part of the gay male community.

Girl Bar, a dyke bar, with 'homosexual ambience' was started by Kira Seymour and Julie Jeong in 1993. Wanting to encourage 'live performance, entertainment fun and coalition politics' the popular night operated out of a number of CBD and southside venues before settling at the Prince of Wales in 2001, where it operated until 2014.

Political groups

The first organisation for homosexual rights, the Daughters of Bilitis (see **Skorus Books** citation), later the Australasian Lesbian Movement, was founded in St Kilda in 1969. The group met initially in a flat in Acland Street, St Kilda, and then for some time at Skorus Books.

Seahorse Victoria, a support organisation for the transgender community, is today undoubtedly one of the oldest and most successful LGBTIQ+ organisations in the state's history. It traces its origins to a meeting in September 1975 at a flat in Acland Street, St Kilda, where a small group of people convened to found a local branch of the Sydney-based organisation of the same name. Within a couple of months, it had formed a committee to manage its affairs and was producing a newsletter. Numbers grew to a dozen or more, and soon the St Kilda flat was too small for meetings. The group often gathered at a cafe on the site where the Victorian Pride Centre is now located.

El Sombrero

Jan Hillier remembers that she and other butch dykes, with less to lose than other lesbians in the armed forces, would sit in the window of El Sombrero café (15 Wellington Street, St Kilda; now lost) – a popular gathering place for lesbians – to keep watch for police. The café was thought to be under surveillance by the police and ASIO at the time. On seeing anyone suspicious draw near, Hillier would raise the alarm and those women in the military would dart out the back of the building.

Positive Living Centre

AIDS hit Australia hard in the early 1980s, and St Kilda was one of the epicenters of the epidemic in Melbourne. In 1993, the **Positive Living Centre** was established with the support of the St Kilda Council to provide drop-in spaces, policy development and service-delivery.

Public events

The first attempt to provide a regular public celebration for lesbians, gay men and their friends followed the decriminalisation of male homosexual acts in 1980. The Alternative Lifestyle Organisation (ALSO) was set up to do what many of its members had been doing for some years already – getting gay people together for semi-public events to celebrate the Queen's Birthday and Melbourne Cup Eve. GayDay was established to celebrate decriminalisation and, unlike earlier events, was openly advertised and held in a very public place: Junction Oval at St Kilda Junction. GayDay was held from 1980 to 1985. In 1996, the Pride March was inaugurated. The first Pride March attracted 11,000 people including high school kids, drag queens and community organisations, who marched down Fitzroy Street together in celebration.

Victorian Pride Centre

In 2021, the Victorian Pride Centre opened at 79-81 Fitzroy Street, a product of collaborative effort by LGBTIQ+ communities and the State government. Its goal is to celebrate, bolster and protect equality, diversity and inclusion.²³ The centre houses a number of community organisations and has contributed to the revitalisation of Fitzroy Street.

SOURCES

Graham Willett, *The Very Queer History of St Kilda: People, Places and Events*, unpublished paper, 2016.

Melbourne Star Observer, 7 April 2000.

Evelyn Lobos, 'Girlbar - 8th Birthday Celebration' *Lesbiana*, Issue 107, November 2001.

Jan Hillier in 'The Bad Old Days', *Lesbians on the Loose*, Vol. 9, Issue 7, July 1998.

²³ Victorian Pride Centre, www.vpc.org.au, accessed 27 September 2020.

University of Melbourne Precinct

PARKVILLE, MELBOURNE

The University of Melbourne was founded in 1855 and for most of its history it promoted the middle-class liberalism that characterised Victoria's social and cultural life, adapting only cautiously to the changing world. The Parkville campus also holds important meaning for LGBTIQ+ communities. In the 1960s and 1970s the university was one of the key sites for the emergence of new liberal attitudes towards homosexuality and radical currents expressed in the gay liberation movement.

The Baillieu Library

The Baillieu is the university's main library. Its Special Collections are the repository for two of the most important collections relating to Victoria's queer heritage, namely the **Victorian Women's Liberation and Lesbian Feminist Archives** and the **John Willis Gay and Lesbian Fiction Collection** (see citations). A subject guide on 'Homosexuality and the University of Melbourne' is available. The University Archives holds the papers of, among other important figures, Julian Phillips, who was a member of the Victorian Equal Opportunity Advisory Council (see **Papers relating to the Victorian Transsexual Coalition**). His papers contain a range of materials to do with LGBTIQ+ discrimination and homosexual decriminalisation which explain how Victoria came to have what was often described at the time as the best law reform package in the English-speaking world.

The Special Collections also contains a complete set of the student newspaper *Farrago*. Its shift to the left in the 1960s saw the newspaper

publish some of the earliest public discussions of homosexuality in the form of reviews of plays, books and films (including some that were banned in Australia). During the gay liberation period after 1972, *Farrago* published frequent letters, articles and manifestos.

Union House

Union House is the site of the first two public meetings held in Victoria to discuss the issue of homosexual law reform. In 1964, the Debating Society hosted a debate on the decriminalisation of homosexual acts between consenting adults in private. More than 500 people (students, staff and members of the public) crammed into the grand buffet hall on the building's mezzanine floor. Tradition dictated a vote on which side had made the most convincing case – the 'yes' side won resoundingly with some 300 votes to 100. This was such a startling outcome that *The Australian* newspaper (then a new and very liberal publication) reported the result and sought responses from prominent Melbournians. The Anglican Archbishop of Melbourne was one of those who endorsed the audience's position.²⁴

In 1970, the newly formed Victorian branch of the Campaign Against Moral Persecution (CAMP) (see **The Chapter House, St Paul's Cathedral**) held its first public meeting in the grand buffet hall. There was a psychiatrist, a lawyer (Julian Phillips of the Law School), the female co-chair of CAMP and an openly homosexual man. The flyer erroneously called the group 'K.A.M.P', reflecting an older spelling of the name that many, perhaps most homosexual men and women used for themselves between the 1940s and 1972.²⁵

The Gay Liberation Front arrived in Melbourne in 1972, meeting in the Undergraduate Lounge (now the Joe Napolitano Room) on the first floor of Union House. There were about 200 at the early meetings, though numbers later dropped to around 50. Those who were there remember a diverse range of attendees: high school students, lesbian feminists, and people who described themselves as 'humansexuals'. Here the actions of early gay liberation were planned, and consciousness-raising groups aimed at eradicating internalised homophobia were organised.

In 1975, the First National Homosexual Conference, supported by the Australian Union of Students, attracted 600 attendees, sparking a revival of gay activism which was at that time flagging. Union House subsequently hosted the Gay Society and later the Queer Space. This tradition of service and advocacy is continued today by the multiplicity of groups associated with the University of Melbourne Student Union's Queer Department, including with a campaign for all-gender toilets in Union House to increase safety and inclusivity for trans, intersex and gender diverse students: 'bathrooms for all, not just the cis!'²⁶

Beaurepaire Centre (sports centre)

The Beaurepaire Recreation Centre, designed in 1955 by architects Eggleston Macdonald and Secomb, is of architectural and historic significance as an important example of the meeting of philanthropy, fine art, clearly articulated structure and functional rationalism in mid-1950s architectural design. It includes Leonard French murals and a bronzed statue of Zeus donated by Melbourne's Greek Orthodox community. For LGBTIQ+ Victorians it has social, recreational and erotic meaning.

The Gay Liberation Front held some of its early dances at the Beaurepaire Centre, giving people a chance to dance, flirt and let their hair down. It was important to many of the radicals who made up gay liberation that these events were non-commercial, seen as part of a process of building a better world; one without commercial exploitation of gay people. And all of this was taking place under the watchful eye of an imposing bronzed statue of naked Zeus. A 1968 letter to the editor of *Farrago* provides a rare piece of written evidence for the sports centre's role as a beat for men seeking sex with other men.

Beats

There were a number of beats scattered throughout the campus. In 1999 the student union voted to implement a policy requiring that Union House staff not interfere unduly with suspected sexual behaviour in the men's toilets in the basement. Those engaging in sexual behaviour were enjoined to be considerate of others. The toilets were later refurbished in a design that restricted their use for sexual contact.

HERITAGE LISTINGS

There are a number of buildings at the University of Melbourne that are included in the Victorian Heritage Register or in the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme. These include the Beaurepaire Centre which is included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR H1045)

SOURCES

Graham Willett, *From Camp to Gay: the homosexual history of the University of Melbourne 1960-1976*, History of the University Unit, Department of History, University of Melbourne, Parkville, 2002.

Victorian Heritage Database, <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au>, accessed 9 September 2020.

²⁴ 'Dr Woods Agrees with legalised homosexuality', *Australian*, 26 July 1964

²⁵ On kamp with a 'k' see Graham Willett, *ACTing Out: Canberra's Very Queer History*, ACT Government, 2020, pp. 9 and 135

²⁶ Andie Moore, *Stalls for All: Reviewing and Reconsidering Gendered Bathrooms at the University of Melbourne*, Queer Political Action Collective, Melbourne, 2019.



Swanston and Collins Streets Precinct

MELBOURNE

The principle that ‘heritage’ refers to places and objects that still exist has been adhered to in this report. In this citation, however, we have included a precinct that is only partially intact. The streetscape around Swanston and Collins Streets contains many places that are of significant to LGBTIQ+ Victorians, but often this involves an act of imagination – an earlier version of the Hotel Australia, a café where a chemist is now, a grand building replaced by a square and so on. We think this study in absence throws light on the nature of heritage, survival and memory that is important.

Collins Street, Melbourne has been one of the city’s most fashionable promenades since at least the 1860s, with much of the streetscape still providing evidence of its wealth and prestige. Swanston Street is the city’s main north-south artery. Between the 1930s and the 1950s, this area was the location of a number of cafes and restaurants where kamp women and men could gather for an evening out. With pubs closing at 6pm until 1966, cafes and restaurants were important places for socialising. Tolerant management and a degree of discretion was all that was required for LGBTIQ+ people to join in.

Anchored by the grand Victoria Building (since demolished, where the old City Square is now), along Collins Street as far as the Hotel Australia and along Swanston Street as far as **Val’s Coffee Lounge** (see citation), a number of venues formed an LGBTIQ+ precinct for the best part of 20 years. As kamp people started to emerge, cautiously, to greater visibility, the Swanston and Collins streets precinct is where they came to.

Our knowledge of these places is drawn almost entirely from oral histories so the information about the venues and their clientele is largely from that perspective. Further research in future may broaden this view.

Hotel Australia

The Hotel Australia at 262-270 Collins Street was a gathering place for kamp men (and occasionally women) from the 1940s. In the 1970s the downstairs bar was remodelled and renamed the Woolshed Bar. It was closed in 1979, as its management had become increasingly hostile to LGBTIQ+ people. On the night of the bar’s closure, two men kissing each other goodbye outside the venue were arrested by police, and subsequently convicted of offensive behaviour. Soon after 100 people gathered for a passionate kiss-in on the steps of the Hotel in protest at the conviction of the men and hotel management.

Tait’s Tea House

Tait’s Tea House was in the basement of the Manchester Unity building (220 Collins Street). Tait’s was a large coffee shop that could seat up to 200 people. It was popular from at least the early 1940s. The Manchester Unity’s heavy use of male nudes in a series of incised plaques set into the upper sections of the walls of the ground floor arcade could hardly have gone unnoticed.

Victoria Building

In the Victoria Building (south-east corner of Swanston and Collins Streets), the kamp crowd gathered in the Liberty Belle Coffee Lounge and the adjoining City Club Hotel from the mid-1940s to the early 1950s. The Liberty Belle could seat 50 to 60 people in booth-style seating.

Raffles Cafe

Raffles Cafe (in the basement of Howey House at 234-250 Collins Street, Melbourne) was a popular meeting place in the 1940s and 1950s and is well-remembered by some for its charming red-haired manager and for the fact that for 10 pence you could buy a cup of coffee, unlimited refills and two biscuits.

The Club

In the mid-1930s, somewhere further down Collins Street between Elizabeth and Queen streets, The Club operated on Saturday and Sunday nights exclusively for kamp men. You could bring your own alcohol, or the operators offered a sly-grog service (illegal alcohol sales). The Club offered changing rooms for men to get in and out of drag. ‘Bill’ remembers his debut performance there. He wore a white dress with a four-foot train.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

262-270 Collins Street is included in the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme (H502 The Block Precinct)

The Manchester Unity Building is included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR H0411)

Howey House is included in the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme (H502 The Block Precinct)

SOURCES

Interviews with Bill #1 (19/01/1983); Max Grant (11 March 1983), Ron Philp (5 May 1983), Malcolm and Robert (9 November 1983). All by Graham Carbery, Australian Queer Archives Oral History Collection.

Richard Peterson, ‘The Australia, the Woolshed, and Sexual Gaze’, *La Trobe Journal*, No. 87, May 2011, pp. 32-43.

John Willis Gay and Lesbian Fiction Collection

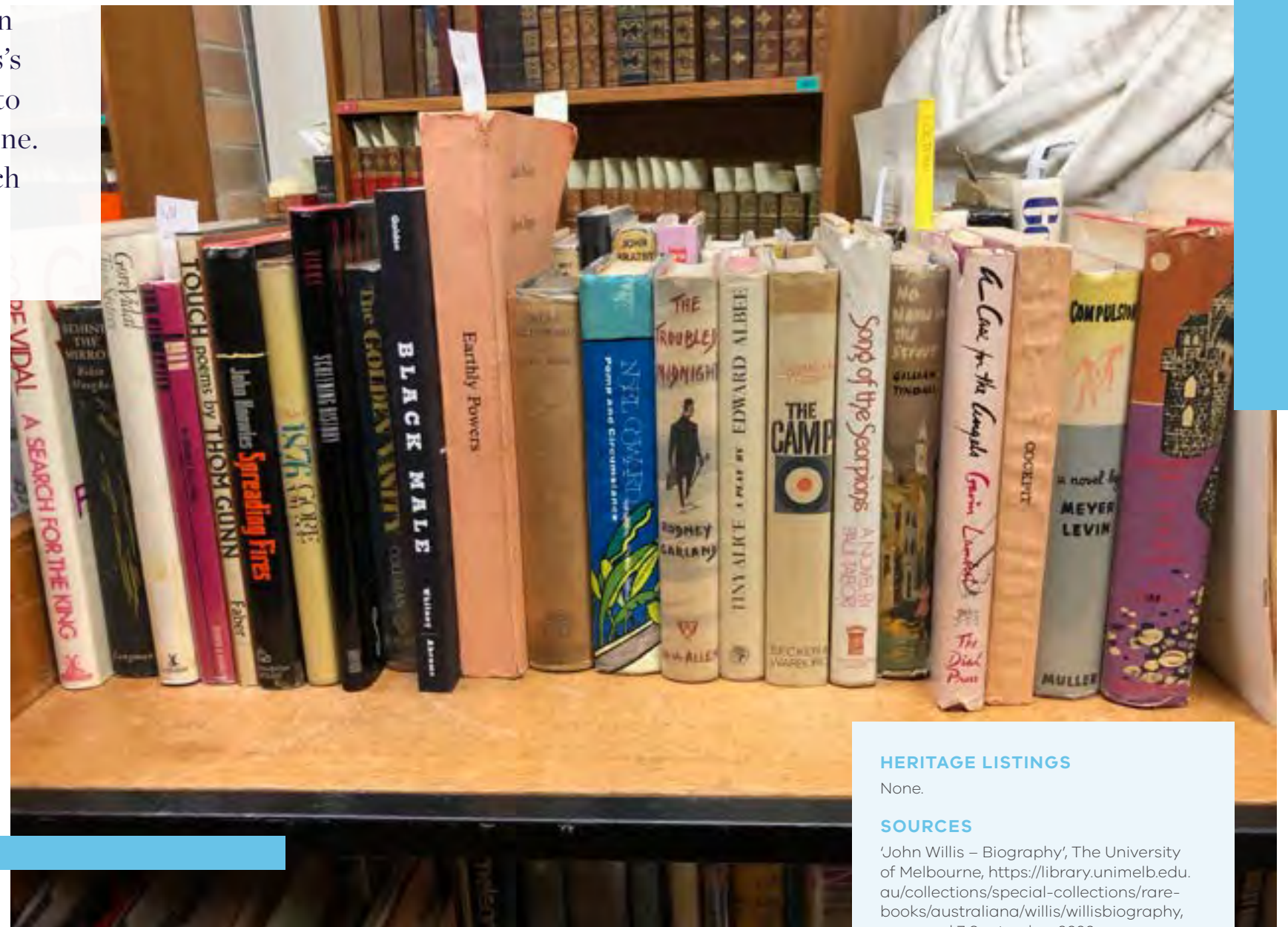
BAILLIEU LIBRARY, UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

The John Willis Gay and Lesbian Fiction Collection, now held by Special Collections in the Melbourne University library, comprises more than 5,000 volumes and contains literature with queer themes or LGBTIQ+ characters or incidents (including minor characters); literature by authors known or reputed to be queer; non-fiction homosexual studies; non-fiction sexual studies; and serials. While the focus was initially on gay and lesbian material, the collection grew to encompass all LGBTIQ+ communities. It includes publications from 1884 to the early twenty-first century; classics, obscure works and items that might in the past have been considered trivial. It is international in scope.

The collection had its origins in the mid-1970s when two bibliographies were published overseas – Ian Young's *The Male Homosexual in Literature* (1975) and Barbara Grier's *The Lesbian in Literature* (1976). It was a revelation to many that so much writing on gay themes existed, and John Willis, a pastor with the gay-focussed Christ's Community Church (see **Order of Service, Christ's Community Church**) and founder of **The Hub** (see citation), decided to start collecting.

He collected in Australia and during visits overseas. The collection was enhanced when Margaret Bernasconi, a lesbian activist in Melbourne, donated her extensive library of lesbian writings; and enhanced further when the library of the early gay and lesbian rights organisation, Society Five, passed to Willis.

Eventually the collection started to overrun Willis's house and he donated it to the University of Melbourne. The books, many of which are rare, are available for reading onsite.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

'John Willis – Biography', The University of Melbourne, <https://library.unimelb.edu.au/collections/special-collections/rare-books/australiana/willis/willisbiography>, accessed 7 September 2020.

Thanks to John Willis for his assistance with the citation.

Daylesford Precinct

DAYLESFORD, VICTORIA

Daylesford is a picturesque town nestled at the foot of Victoria's Great Dividing Range. It is green and lush, and its soils are rich with minerals and mineral springs. For tens of thousands of years, it has been home to and remains the traditional lands of the Dja Dja Wurrung people. There are many places of historical significance in the Daylesford area that are historically significant, including sites and buildings that relate to Daylesford's gold mining history and Swiss-Italian heritage. The historic streetscape immediately announces the town's goldrush and nineteenth-century heritage, but it is the prominence of rainbow flags on buildings and in windows that signals another significant connection: to Victoria's LGBTIQ+ community.

As a result of its fertile, mineral-rich soil and the cascading waters of its mineral springs, Daylesford has long been a popular tourist destination and is often seen as a place of calm and healing. It has also been a place that has a strong association with alternative lifestyles: off-grid living, yoga ashrams and, for the past four decades, one of the most queer-friendly places in Australia.

The arrival of the railway in the 1880s brought visitors from Melbourne and saw the establishment of Daylesford's first guesthouses. Reminiscent of European landscapes, the Daylesford and Hepburn area was favoured by many pre- and post-World War II European migrants. By the 1920s, the arrival of the motor car had boosted the tourism trade. After mining activity ended and the economic depression of the 1930s struck, tourism declined and the town slipped back into a quiet, farming community for the next few decades.

In the late 1970s a renewed interest began to grow in the natural beauty and mineral springs that Daylesford offered. It was around this time, too, that the area became popular with lesbian women and gay men. Housing affordability, the promise

of relative anonymity, and beautiful bushland surroundings were attractive features to those looking for a place to form a new community and home.

This growing lesbian and gay community organised social events and occasions, including Women's Balls – started by local resident Anah Holland-Moore – that encouraged a regular connection between lesbian and questioning women from Melbourne and the Daylesford and Hepburn area. Each Friday night, local restaurant Absolutely Fabulous Jack's closed to the public and invited lesbian women and gay men to mingle socially. By the mid-1990s, Daylesford was home to an increasing number of gay men and lesbian women, and they worked hard to make Daylesford a vibrant and viable place to live. Many of the town's former guesthouses were resurrected and old miners' cottages were transformed into bed and breakfasts. Restaurants and other retail businesses were established.

It wasn't long before a small group decided that Daylesford would benefit from a business network that marketed the town as a lesbian and gay-friendly destination and promoted the many gay and lesbian commercial activities in the area. From this initial idea, a group named Springs Connections soon formed and became an active advocate for gay and lesbian enterprise in the Daylesford and Hepburn area. Springs Connection was also a great promotional tool for local business owners to encourage more gay and lesbian visitors to the area.

The success of this early business network in attracting the 'pink dollar' as well as the LGBTIQ+ community to Daylesford, was the inspiration for the idea behind the ChillOut Festival. In 1997, the first ChillOut Festival took place with around 100 attendees. In 2020, ChillOut Festival is the biggest and longest running queer pride event in regional Australia. The success of this annual event has helped boost Daylesford's reputation as a gay and lesbian-friendly town and LGBTIQ+ hub.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

A number of historic buildings and gardens in Daylesford are included in the Victorian Heritage Register or in the Heritage Overlay of the Hepburn Planning Scheme.

SOURCES

'A short history of Daylesford', Daylesford Regional Visitor Information Centre, <https://visithhepburnshire.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Short-History-of-Daylesford-Updated-Dec-2019.pdf>, accessed 10 September 2020.

'ChillOut History', ChillOut Festival, <https://www.chilloutfestival.com.au/history>, accessed 10 September 2020.

'Daylesford Stories', Culture Victoria, <https://cv.vic.gov.au/stories/a-diverse-state/daylesford-stories>, accessed 10 September 2020.

Richard White, 'From the majestic to the mundane: democracy, sophistication and history among the mineral spas of Australia', *Journal of Tourism History*, Vol. 4, Issue 1, 2012, pp. 85-108.

Victorian Heritage Database, <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au>, accessed 10 September 2020.

Gertrude Street Precinct

FITZROY, MELBOURNE

Many buildings in Gertrude Street, Fitzroy are notable for their aesthetic and historic significance as part of a prominent late nineteenth and early twentieth-century residential, retail and commercial area. However, the street also reflects important aspects of LGBTIQ+ history. The 800 metres of Gertrude Street running from Nicholson Street in Fitzroy to Smith Street in Collingwood is a strip that has radiated queer and political history since the 1970s. Well before this, it had been a significant meeting place for Victoria's Koorie population and is considered the birthplace of many influential Aboriginal organisations, including the Victorian Aboriginal Health Service and Aboriginal Housing Board of Victoria.

A number of organisations particular to the lesbian, feminist and bisexual women's communities were located on this strip, including Shrew Women's Bookshop at 37 Gertrude Street (selling books 'for and about women'), Gertrude's Gift Shop next door at number 39, and the Women's Liberation Building at 28 Gertrude Street. Located close together, these organisations contributed to a vibrant community.

Shrew Women's Bookshop

Shrew Women's Bookshop (once located at 37 Gertrude Street, Fitzroy) was considered Melbourne's first feminist bookshop and from 1983 to 1997 was a vital part of the community, regularly hosting events as part of its annual calendar, talking all things lesbian on the local 3CR radio station and selling tickets to women's events across Melbourne. At various times, the floor above the bookshop housed other businesses including massage for women and Great Sensations, offering pleasurable gifts for women.

Women's Liberation Building

Diagonally opposite Shrew Women's Bookshop was the Women's Liberation Building at 28 Gertrude Street, Fitzroy, which from 1988 to 1992 was a hub of political and feminist activity, providing 'space and resources for various activist collectives to meet and plan actions and activities'.²⁷ It housed support-based collectives Lesbian Line and Lesbian Open House, as well as the Women's Liberation Archives, which later became the **Victorian Women's Liberation and Lesbian Feminist Archives** (see citation).

Key Club

From the late 1970s, the Key Club at 22 Gertrude Street (then the Carlton Club Hotel) hosted a variety of events including 'Squizzys' – a women's only night every Thursday, a 'mixed gay' night on Fridays and a 'guys only' night on Saturdays. The Key Club opened in 1978 and closed in 1989.

David Menadue remembers the Key Club's vibrant scene:

I remember one night in the Key Club in 1979, it was very crowded and there was no room for dancing. So all the men took their shirts off, put their arms around one another and moved up and down to Patrick Hernandez's 'Born to Be Alive'.²⁸

Builders Arms Hotel

Uncle Jack Charles, a gay Indigenous Elder born to a Bunurong mother and a Wiradjuri father, and a member of the Stolen Generations, remembers frequenting the Builders Arms Hotel at 211 Gertrude Street in the 1960s, and finding members of his blood family. The hotel was known locally at that time as the 'Black Pub' or the 'Black Senate'.²⁹ a history that dated back to the 1940s and is commemorated in a historical marker affixed to the outside wall of the building. In 1996, the **Builders Arms Hotel** (see citation) started hosting the popular Q+A (Queer and Alternative) nights, OutBlack events and various queer cabarets. Q+A continued at the Builders Arms Hotel until 2005 when it moved to A Bar Called Barry (at 64 Smith Street, Collingwood), winding up in 2007.

Public spaces

In the 1990s, the City of Yarra supported various events in the area as part of the Midsumma Festival, including exhibitions at Gertrude Contemporary at 200 Gertrude Street and nearby at the 69 Smith Street Gallery. The billboards on the corner of Smith and Gertrude streets have also featured the work of prominent LGBTIQ+ artists, including Deborah Kelly and Tina Fiveash's 'Hey Hetero' public art project.

In 2014 a rainbow crossing was painted on the footpath near the small park at the intersection of Gertrude and Smith streets to welcome delegates to the International AIDS Conference held in Melbourne that year. In 2016, in response to the mass shooting at the Pulse nightclub in Orlando in the United States, the crossing became a makeshift memorial as Melbourne's LGBTIQ+ communities gathered to honour the 49 people who were killed.

27 'Archive No 47: Women's Liberation Centre', Victorian Women's Liberation and Lesbian Feminist Archives, <http://www.wllfa.org.au/bios-pdf/arch47-WLC.pdf>, accessed 21 September 2020.

28 David Menadue, *Positive*, Allen and Unwin, Crows Nest, 2003, pp. 32, 122.

29 Aboriginal History of Yarra, Sites of Significance: <https://aboriginalhistoryofyarra.com.au/sites-of-significance/?siteVar=16>



HERITAGE LISTINGS

37 Gertrude Street, Fitzroy is included in the Heritage Overlay of the Yarra Planning Scheme (HO361 World Heritage Environs Area Precinct)

18-22 Gertrude Street, Fitzroy is included in the Heritage Overlay of the Yarra Planning Scheme (HO361 World Heritage Environs Area Precinct)

200 Gertrude Street is included in the Heritage Overlay of the Yarra Planning Scheme (HO334 South Fitzroy Precinct)

SOURCES

'Builders Arms Hotel', historical marker, 221 Gertrude St, Fitzroy

Northside Precinct

COLLINGWOOD, MELBOURNE

As one of Melbourne's earliest suburbs, Collingwood contains many heritage places that reflect its significant history as an industrial and residential area. Collingwood's strong connections to LGBTIQ+ communities are also an important aspect of its heritage. During the 1970s and 1980s, Melbourne's gay commercial scene became larger, more visible and more diverse. This was historically unprecedented. Over the course of the 1980s, two major zones emerged – Northside in Collingwood and Commercial Road in Prahran (sometimes known as Southside).

The label 'Northside' was developed by a group of entrepreneurs associated with The Laird, The Peel, Club 80 and the Gatehouse as an alternative to the Commercial Road scene (see **Commercial Road precinct**). It was centred on what one observer called a dogleg of streets from Smith, down Peel and Gipps across Hoddle Street. But the precinct exists in a wider sense as well: in 1997 there were said to be 45 businesses catering for queer people around what was briefly badged as the Collingwood Zone. This took in the distinct **Gertrude Street precinct** (see citation) and the length of Smith Street, and included restaurants, cafes, bars, clothing stores and video rental shops.

The crowd that frequented Northside was distinguishable from the crowd found in the Commercial Road precinct: less scene-focussed, less fashion-conscious and more political. Yet the success of the Northside scene has doubtless also contributed to the gentrification of the inner northern suburbs.

The Laird

The Laird O'Cockpen Hotel has existed at 149 Gipps Street in the heart of Abbotsford since 1847. In September 1980, new owners decided to run it as a gay bar, rebadged as The Laird. Sensitive to the claims of long-standing locals, who were well ensconced, the hotel design included a front bar for them and a back bar to appeal to gay men. The owners' particular focus was on those who were less interested in drag or disco and more in having a beer with their mates.

The Laird was the place in Melbourne where the emerging gay style known as the new masculinity, or the clone look, was first manifested. The clones (so called because they all looked alike) dressed in a conventionally masculine wardrobe – denim, flannelette shirts, work boots – and sported short hair and moustaches. The Laird became a strong supporter of Melbourne's bear, leather and fetish scene. (Bears are larger, or heavy-set hairy gay or bisexual men.) This clientele has been the mainstay of The Laird for over 40 years and many speak of a strong sense of camaraderie. The Laird developed an international reputation that put it on the agenda for gay tourists from Australia and around the world.

The Laird has also played a significant role in fundraising for the gay community, especially supporting community responses to HIV/AIDS. On July 12, 1983, a public meeting was held there which established the Victorian AIDS Action Committee, later VAC/GMHC, and now Thorn Harbour Health.

In 1998, the Laird's owners were granted an exemption from Victoria's anti-discrimination laws to allow the bar to legally exclude women. Being 'men-only' had been a long-standing policy and in the early 1990s, political activists pushed back, inviting women friends to come with them to The Laird. The Anti-Discrimination Tribunal (ADT) accepted that the hotel had an 'essentially male character', and that 'gay male patrons would be inhibited in the way they expressed themselves' with women present.³⁰ Despite the male-only culture and the ADT exemption, The Laird does admit, from time to time, a diversity of guests for particular community events.



30 'Laird Turns 30', http://www.lairdhotel.com/sso_laird_30th.pdf, accessed 22 September 2020.

The Peel

The Peel (originally the Sir Robert Peel Hotel) at 46 Peel St, Collingwood opened as a gay dance club in 1988 in an old-established hotel on the corner of Peel and Wellington streets. Extending the Laird's precedent, it has an exemption from anti-discrimination law to allow it to exclude women and heterosexual people, a point of controversy in LGBTIQ+ communities. The male clientele exhibits a wider variety of styles than the more conventionally masculine crowd at The Laird. Drag performers are not unheard of. The interior has been redesigned numerous times, but the common features include dance floors, lounging spaces and, more recently, an outdoor but covered smoking atrium.

The Gatehouse

The growth of Northside as the home of a heavily masculine scene encouraged other businesses to move in. In 1995 'Australia's only guest house specifically designed for the male SM [sadoomasochism] scene' opened.³¹ Located at 97 Cambridge Street, Collingwood, conveniently between The Peel and The Laird, it was not a large establishment, with just four double rooms, but each room had a mezzanine with its own private 'play area'. It is clear that by this time, the emergence of SM (sadoomasochism) – alongside bears, leather and other fetish preferences – had generated an identifiable sub-culture. Annual gatherings of this scene attracted men and women (though fewer) to Melbourne to explore and celebrate the new sub-culture.

Club 80

When police raided Club 80 (located at 10 Peel St Collingwood) in 1986 and charged the managers with running an unlicensed brothel, they demonstrated a profound misunderstanding of what kind of sex venue it was. The actual model was simple – men paid an entry charge and then took their chances that one or more of the other patrons might want to have sex with them. There were no paid sex workers, which is why the charges were dismissed by the court. This legal victory paved the way for the emergence of what became known as the SOPV (sex on premises venue) industry.

Club 80's look was extravagantly industrial, with areas on the lower floor decorated with 40-gallon drums, prison bars and dim lighting. This styling referenced the history of public sex on the docks and warehouses (an imagined history, drawing on New York rather than Australia). There was a coffee lounge and films upstairs. Over time, Club 80's offerings expanded to sex parties of various kinds. In 2020, the business closed and the building was scheduled to be converted to office space. Club 80's closure prompted an outpouring of grief at the loss of a space that was treasured by its patrons for both its sexual and social value.

Wet on Wellington

Wet on Wellington (located at 162 Wellington Street Collingwood) is a bathhouse or sauna, which opened on 10 April 2001 at 162 Wellington St, Collingwood. It is a reminder of the generous philanthropy of Dr John Singleton, who established a dispensary on the site in 1869 to administer free medical attention and provide spiritual guidance to the poor. The original dispensary was replaced with this larger facility in 1889, funded by a public appeal. The dispensary was the first home of the Salvation Army in Victoria and was the first practice to employ a female doctor, Laura Morgan.

While poor queer people in the nineteenth century would have benefited from Singleton's philanthropy, the building has meaning to contemporary LGBTIQ+ people as a sex on premises venue. Saunas in Melbourne can be traced back to at least the 1960s, when **Bucchi's Continental Baths** (see citation) opened in Collins Street. Wet on Wellington was designed to impress, to shake off the somewhat seedy reputation that saunas had attracted. The interior continues the Renaissance façade, with Roman columns and statuary, chandeliers, a full-length pool, a bar and outdoor terrace. Upstairs is designed with spaces for sex, with plenty of areas for people to cruise. According to the manager, the venue's target audience was 'men who do not identify with the gay community'.³²

In the early 2000s there were monthly women-only nights, including MOIST, the ALSO Foundation's Women's only pool party and sauna night. Monthly swingers' nights were held, catering to heterosexual and bisexual people, and the venue hosts occasional Midsumma parties, performances, and trans events.

³¹ 'Bound for Anzac', *Brother Sister*, 18 April 1996.

³² Rex Wockner, 'Bathhouse to air TV ads', *World News*, 15 May 2003.

HERITAGE LISTINGS

The Sir Robert Peel Hotel is included in the Heritage Overlay of the Yarra Planning Scheme (HO142)

97 Cambridge Street, Collingwood is included in the Heritage Overlay of the Yarra Planning Scheme (HO318 Collingwood Slope Precinct)

162 Wellington Street is included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR H0497)

SOURCES

David Grant, 'John Wain – Northside', *Brother Sister*, 29 June 1995.

'Melbourne Gay Insider', *Capital Q*, 23 September 1994.

'Wain's World', *Focus*, Spring 1995.

Australian Queer Archives

**VICTORIAN PRIDE CENTRE, 79-81
FITZROY STREET, ST KILDA**

The Australian Queer Archives (AQuA) is an organisation dedicated to 'collecting, preserving and celebrating Australia's very queer history'. The collection comprises more than 500 metres of shelves with material in a variety of formats, reflecting the history of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, trans people, intersex people, sistergirls and brotherboys, as well as the diverse communities and sub-cultures which come under the broad term of 'queer'.

It operates as a community-based, volunteer-operated and not-for-profit organisation. AQuA has cultural, historical and social importance as the largest and most complete collection of Australian LGBTIQ+ historical materials in the world. Originally called the Australian Gay Archives, it changed its name in 1991 to the Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives, acknowledging that the term 'gay' was no longer understood in the inclusive sense it had been in the 1970s. In December 2020, after a two-year consultation process to adopt a more inclusive name, a special general meeting of members changed the name of the organisation to Australian Queer Archives (AQuA).

The Archives was founded at the 4th National Homosexual Conference in Sydney in 1978 in response to a proposal put forward to the final plenary by Graham Carbery. With material gathered by Carbery and others including Liz Ross, Phil Carswell and Gary Jaynes, the collection was first contained in two filing cabinets at Carbery's house in Flemington. As the collection grew, it was moved to various other locations, including **The Hub** in West Melbourne. In 1996 the collection was moved to the Victorian AIDS

Council in Claremont Street, South Yarra. In 2021, it moved into the Victorian Pride Centre in St Kilda (see **St Kilda precinct**) as a foundation tenant.

AQuA has always operated with an expansive collection policy in terms of both format and scope. It holds material in more than 30 different formats, including periodicals, ephemera, posters, badges, books, newspaper clippings, personal and organisational papers, and audio-visual recordings. In scope, AQuA aspires to collect and preserve material relating to the lives of all Australian LGBTIQ+ people, in the various ways that they have identified and been known in Australian history.

AQuA's collection is unique but the way the organisation operates is significant, too. The committee of management and its volunteers concentrate expertise and bring passion to collecting and celebrating the past.

This work brings a significant marginalised population into the national story. AQuA reaches audiences in a way that most collecting institutions can rarely do, including through history walks, exhibitions, publishing, an annual history conference and a presence at community festivals around the country.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Way Back When Consulting Historians, *Australian Lesbian & Gay Archives Significance Assessment*, 2010.

Victorian Women's Liberation and Lesbian Feminist Archives

UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE ARCHIVES

The Women's Liberation Archives was established by a collective in 1983 to 'collect, catalogue, make accessible, house, produce, increase awareness about and hold in trust' material relating to the women's liberation movement in Victoria.³³ The word 'lesbian' was added to the title in 1992, reflecting the already existing collection policy. It was housed in several locations over the years until in 2000 it was incorporated as the Victorian Women's Liberation and Lesbian Feminist Archives Inc (VWLLFA) and lodged with the University of Melbourne Archives.

The VWLLFA hold significant collections of material generated by the women's liberation movement in Victoria, a movement in which lesbians have always played a prominent part. As such, the specifically lesbian collections, such as Daughters of Bilitis/Australasian Lesbian Movement (see citation), Radicalesbians (see **Whitehall Guest House**), Lynx, Lesbian Action Group, Lesbian Mothers Bridge the Gap Forum and the Lesbian Newsletter, are located within a collection that emphasises their wider context.

There are 158 collections (as at 2020), of which 58 are from lesbian groups or from groups in which lesbians were prominently involved. Many of the personal collections were donated by lesbian women.

Volunteer-operated and community-funded, the collection was housed in various women's centres until the Women's Liberation Building closed in 1992. The collection was available to be used by researchers. It was positioned at the heart of the women's movement and its collections pay tribute to the enormous contribution that lesbian activists have made to the women's liberation movement. The collection reflects, too, the diversity of activism, encompassing newsletters, t-shirts, badges and posters, photographs, materials from political campaigns – and even a clown costume from a member of the Performing Older Women's Circus (see **The Circus Women's Memorial Bench**).

Depositing the collection with the University of Melbourne Archives has been a 'fruitful collaboration', according to Jean Taylor, the collection's active curator since 1984. It brought the collection into the public realm (it is available for use during library open hours) and provided a level of security (temperature control, fire protection, collection listings) that the volunteer-based collection could not provide. But volunteers maintain an active involvement – receiving donations, sorting and indexing materials, producing online listings, and financially managing grants and bequests to ensure the continuity of this invaluable collection for posterity.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Jean Taylor, *The Archives Trilogy: Brazen Hussies, Stropdy Dykes, Lesbians Ignite!*, Women's Liberation Movement and Lesbian Feminist Activism in Australia, 1969-1999.

Jean Taylor, 'Victorian Women's Liberation and Lesbian Feminist Archives Inc', unpublished paper presented at the Australian Society of Archivists National Conference, University of Melbourne, 26 September 2017.

Victorian Women's Liberation and Lesbian Feminist Archives Inc, www.vwllfa.org.au, accessed 9 September 2020.

³³ Jean Taylor, *Stropdy Dykes: Radical Lesbian Feminist Activism in Victoria during the 1980s*, Dyke Books, Melbourne, p. 268

Commercial Road Precinct

PRAHRAN, MELBOURNE

There are many heritage places in Commercial Road, Prahran that are recognised in the City of Stonnington planning scheme for their historic and social significance as part of a notable commercial precinct. However, Commercial Road is also important to the history of LGBTIQ+ communities, comprising one of two separate hubs that emerged in the gay scene of the 1990s. Located north and south of the river, these hubs reflect the changing nature of LGBTIQ+ life in Melbourne, through the significantly different demographics of the areas and community populations (see **Northside precinct**).

South Yarra had been a centre for LGBTIQ+ life since at least the 1930s, when its sophisticated flats appealed to a certain kind of homosexual man. The cafes and nightclubs of Toorak Road attracted and welcomed kamp men and women of a certain refinement.

The gay precinct in Commercial Road developed in the 1990s, anchored by two hotels – the Xchange (119 Commercial Road, 1986–2011) and 3 Faces (141–145 Commercial Road, 1990–1999, later known as The Market 1999–2011). The hotels flourished in the 1990s, offering large, well-appointed venues with dance floors, regular shows and a welcome for locals, for those from across the river, or for travellers from interstate and overseas.

Over time these hotels were joined by a flotilla of smaller bars, restaurants and cafes. Hares & Hyenas (see **Hares & Hyenas bookshop and performance space**) set up shop for a while, joined by the Beat Bookshop (which specialised in gay porn and was said to be the first openly gay shopfront in Melbourne). Community organisations gravitated there, notably ALSO (the Alternative Lifestyle Organisation), which was for a long time Melbourne's premier service provider to the LGBTIQ+ community. There was a gay pharmacist, a medical clinic, a male beauty salon, a gym, and clothing stores directed at the newly

emerging gay consumer. Ten+ and Porter Street sex clubs were just off the main strip. In the 1990s, Commercial Road hosted the Midsumma Street Party.

In the late 1990s there was a small memorial to people affected by AIDS. While it is no longer there, many remember trees and metal plaques in the forecourt of a tyre retailer, where the Cullen building is now.

Commercial Road's point of difference from Northside was its embrace of what was rapidly becoming the gay normal – men and women mixing, young people being welcomed, with drag shows a central focus of entertainment. There was some cross-over with The Peel dance-crowd. At one point a bus operated between Northside and Commercial Road venues to connect the scenes. But it was not unheard of for men who were thought of as belonging Northside (rougher, older, more conventionally masculine) to be refused entry to the Commercial Road dance venues.

As early as 2004, there were reports in the LGBTIQ+ press that Commercial Road had exhausted itself (as with Oxford Street in Sydney at around the same time). In 2011, the Market Hotel 'went straight', repositioning itself to appeal to trendy, well-to-do heterosexuals (without actively excluding any LGBTIQ+ people who fitted the economic demographic). It was a clear sign that the precinct was declining as a distinctively LGBTIQ+ commercial area.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

There are a number of places on Commercial Road included in the Heritage Overlay of the Stonnington Planning Scheme including 141–145 Commercial Road, South Yarra (formerly 3 Faces) (HO126 Chapel Street Precinct)

SOURCES

Michael Daniels, 'Commercial Road Y2K', *Brother Sister*, 28 October 1999

David Anthony Phoebe, 'From the Ghetto', *MCV*, 5 November 2004.



SOCIAL LIFE, RECREATION AND GATHERING PLACES

Prince of Wales Hotel

29 FITZROY STREET, ST KILDA

The Prince of Wales Hotel has been on the corner of Acland and Fitzroy streets, St Kilda in its present form since 1937. Designed by specialist hotel architect Robert H. McIntyre, the hotel played a significant role in St Kilda's early history as a seaside resort, and from its opening it appealed to the young and stylish, including kamp people. The Prince of Wales Hotel was a mixing ground for kamp men and American soldiers during World War II, but its importance to LGBTIQ+ communities emerged most strongly with Pokey's drag show on Sunday nights from 1977, and Pennies lesbian disco on Saturdays from 1981.

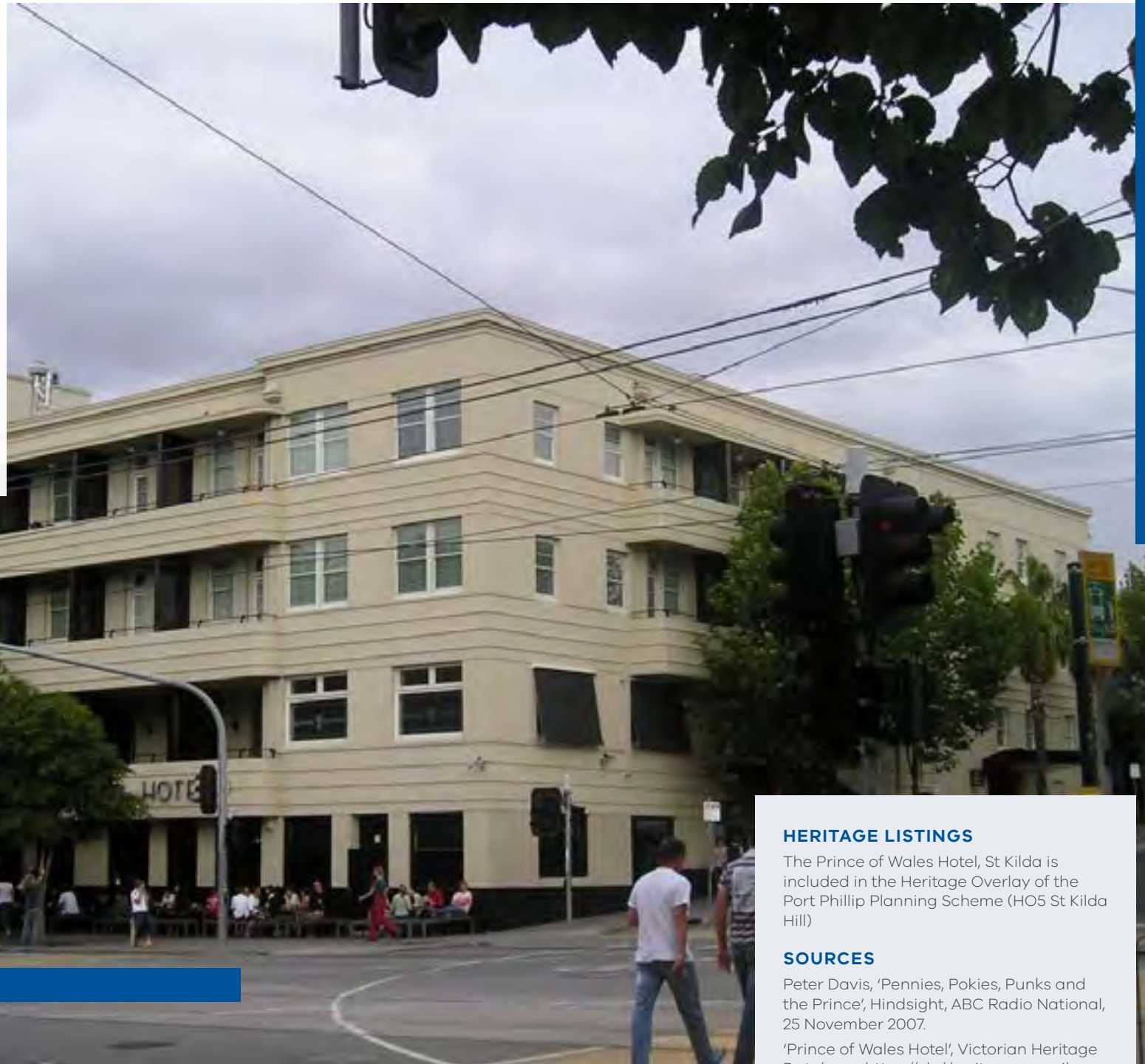
Pokey's was the brainchild of Jan Hillier and Doug Lucas, who both had years of experience in organising kamp social events since the 1960s. In 1977, they decided that the time was right for professional, high-quality drag shows that would appeal to a wide audience. Pokey's was noted for its elaborate and expensive costumes, well-rehearsed and choreographed shows, and its high-quality light and sound systems, none of which was common in Melbourne drag shows at that time, other than at Les Girls (see **Les Girls Cabaret souvenir**).

Pokey's was significant, compared to earlier drag culture, for the way that it openly celebrated gay life. Some of the performers were drag queens, some were transsexuals, and they were usually backed up by dancing boys. Doug Lucas hosted the evening in his brashest drag persona. Pokey's was the kind of place where gay women and men could bring their mothers – the performances could be suggestive but were all in good fun. There was even a piano bar for those who preferred a more traditional sing-along with their friends. Pokey's also attracted celebrities. Cher, Danny La Rue, the cast of *Neighbours*, Don Dunstan and Ita Buttrose all put in an appearance. The show drew an enormous crowd – up to 1,000 people would attend most weeks. Pokey's ran weekly until 1992.

Pennies lesbian disco, also organised by Jan Hillier with Pennie Austin, began in 1981 and continued into the 1990s. It was the first social

night in Melbourne that openly welcomed lesbians and queer women. Pennie herself was a regular, moving through the crowd and making sure everyone was having a good time, regardless of their style. Each night there would be different crowds gathered in different parts of the bar. Off-duty policewomen could be relied on to break up any fights between patrons.

Pokeys and Pennies were significant places where LGBTIQ+ people, their families and their friends could experience their lives as joyous, celebratory and affirming.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

The Prince of Wales Hotel, St Kilda is included in the Heritage Overlay of the Port Phillip Planning Scheme (HO5 St Kilda Hill)

SOURCES

Peter Davis, 'Pennies, Pokies, Punks and the Prince', Hindsight, ABC Radio National, 25 November 2007.

'Prince of Wales Hotel', Victorian Heritage Database, <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/66580>, accessed 8 September 2020.

Sir Charles Hotham Hotel

574-580 FLINDERS STREET, MELBOURNE

The four-storey Sir Charles Hotham Hotel is located at the west end of Melbourne's central business district, on the corner of Flinders and Spencer streets. Built in 1912 in the Art Nouveau style, the building has more recently been a backpacker hostel but was once a favoured watering hole of sailors and waterside workers. It has important meaning to LGBTIQ+ communities as an upstairs bar provided a venue for drag shows and singalongs on Saturday nights in the 1950s and 1960s.

Photographs of queer life in Australia before 1970 are rare. In 2005, two photograph albums from the estate of gay man Tommy McDermott (1926–1992) were donated to the Australian Queer Archives. The photographs depict McDermott's social life from the late 1940s to the 1980s, including private parties, hotels, arts balls, and other functions. Although drag shows were an important part of their lives, the albums reveal that in addition, McDermott and his friends practiced a form of gender nonconformity closer to what may have been understood at the time as female impersonation or transvestism. When these men dressed in women's clothes and wore wigs and make-up, they did so with the intention of passing convincingly as women.³⁴

An interview with a contemporary of McDermott's, about the photographs in his albums, reveals the story of drag shows at the Hotham Hotel. The shows were performed on a stage made of two dining room tables pushed together in front of a bay window. There was an upright piano on each side, and costumes were improvised from whatever was at hand. The crowd was mixed. Kamp men and their friends would queue to get in, and the downstairs working-class male clientele would sometimes come upstairs and join in.

The drag shows and gender nonconforming community at the Hotham Hotel are a significant part of the history of today's trans and gender diverse communities.

The hotel is also an important reminder of the proximity of kamp and 'square' (a word used to refer to heterosexual people, in the language of the time) people's lives and recreational activities in this part of the city in the mid-twentieth century. The stories around the Sir Charles Hotham Hotel reflect a queer world that flourished just outside of respectable middle-class society's field of vision.



³⁴ Noel Tovey distinguishes along these lines between 'drag' and 'female impersonation', Noel Tovey, *Little Black Bastard: A Story of Survival*, Hodder, 2004, p. 121

HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme (HO1074 2-8 Spencer Street)

SOURCES

Interview with Dennis O'Keefe and Russell Grant, conducted by Graham Carbery, 25 February 2005, Australian Queer Archives. Tommy McDermott Collection, Australian Queer Archives.

Myer Department Store

314-336 BOURKE STREET, MELBOURNE

The eight-storey Myer department store has stood prominently in Bourke Street, Melbourne since 1914. The building was designed to impress and its frontage to Bourke Street was extended and rebuilt in the Art Deco style in 1933. It was referred to for many years as the Myer Emporium. It has particular social and historical significance for LGBTIQ+ communities for the kamp culture it housed and projected in the 1950s and 1960s.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the store had become a safe haven for kamp men in search of employment. Part of the reason for this was Freddie Asmussen, who as head of visual merchandising was responsible for every aspect of the presentation of goods for sale. Asmussen identified as a 'quean' and his homosexuality was concealed in plain sight by his flamboyance. 'Outrageousness' could give homosexual people – both women and men – the opportunity to express themselves without necessarily attracting the ire of respectable citizens.

Somewhere in the Myer store was Asmussen's Gold Room, filled with interesting and beautiful objects that he had brought home from his buying trips overseas, such as chandeliers, grass skirts, a broken suit of armour, a box of pompadour wigs – anything that might come in useful for his displays. Asmussen was also responsible for designing Myer's floats in the annual Moomba parade, which year after year won prizes for their creativity, beauty and attention to detail.

Asmussen was in charge of hiring for Myer's Display Department and he used his position to give jobs to other queens, filling the store with young, talented and creative staff. A three-month trial tested new staff member's flair, skill and eye for detail. Those who won themselves a permanent position were part of a team who called themselves 'Freddie's Boys'.

They were loyal to him, to each other, and to Myer, and they were fierce rivals of similar staff at other major department stores in Melbourne, like Georges, Waltons, and Buckley & Nunn.

Importantly, the fact that kamp men could find employment in an environment that did not require them to conceal their true selves was no small thing in Melbourne in the 1950s and 1960s. Myer has continued to play a role in Melbourne's queer community with the art deco Mural Hall hosting events such as the Coming Back Out Ball and the Globe Community Awards



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR H2100)

SOURCES

Graham Willett, 'Freddie Asmussen' in Graham Willett, Wayne Murdoch and Daniel Marshall (eds), *Secret Histories of Queer Melbourne*, Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives, Parkville, 2011, pp. 81-83.

'Myer Melbourne', Victorian Heritage Database, <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/2518>, accessed 10 September 2020.

Val's Coffee Lounge

123 SWANSTON STREET, MELBOURNE

The site at 123 Swanston Street, Melbourne reflects an important story relating to LGBTIQ+ history. Val Eastwood opened a coffee shop here in 1951. She lived above the Tivoli Theatre in Bourke Street and often had friends come to visit after the pubs closed at 6 pm, or after the theatres and cinemas closed for the night. When a Greek businessman offered her the lease of a downstairs space at 123 Swanston Street, Val decided to open a cafe. She soon had people queuing to get in and expanded her business over two floors of the building. Val's Coffee Lounge became a central gathering place for a diverse crowd of patrons and is particularly remembered as a safe space for kamp people in the 1950s.

Val's Coffee Lounge was no ordinary coffee shop. Many remember the decor: the blue carpet over parquet flooring, the mauve chairs, raffia lampshades and coloured globes, and the grand piano. The walls were decorated with murals painted by the artist Veni Stephens. Val prepared exotic food such as Welsh rarebit and spaghetti, and her father proudly brewed the coffee. Val's offered live music – a trio during the week and a concert on Sunday nights – as well as small plays and performances by actors like Frank Thring, who would sometimes recite a racy poem or two.

As Val said, while the decor was striking, 'it was the people that gave [the cafe] the colour'.³⁵ Val herself was one of those colourful people. She was open about her lesbianism and dressed in stylishly cut, rather 'mannish' clothes.

Val's Coffee Lounge was a refuge for outsiders of all kinds – artists and dancers, actors and theatregoers, political activists, 'bodgies' and 'widges' (who were members of a 1950s youth subculture), university students and even school students. Importantly, Val's was one of very few places at that time in Melbourne that welcomed kamp women and men and provided a safe space for them to be themselves without fear of judgement or negative consequences.

By insisting that everyone had a right to relax and be themselves, and by providing a safe space for socialising and free expression, Val was flying in the face of the conservative social norms of the 1950s. This had a powerful impact on some of Val's customers, including one kamp man who told Val that she had saved his life.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme (HO502 The Block Precinct)

SOURCES

Graham Willett, 'Val Eastwood', in Graham Willett, Wayne Murdoch and Daniel Marshall (eds), *Secret Histories of Queer Melbourne*, Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives, Parkville, 2011, pp. 78-80.

Val Eastwood, *The Travelling Mind of Val Eastwood: short stories*, Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives, Parkville, 2009.

³⁵ Val Eastwood, interview with Ruth Ford, in Val Eastwood, *The Travelling Mind of Val Eastwood: short stories*, Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives, Parkville, 2009.

Bucchi's Continental Baths

CENTREWAY ARCADE, 259-263 COLLINS STREET, MELBOURNE

The Centreway Arcade at 259-263 Collins Street, Melbourne contains a site with an important queer history. For well over thirty years, there was a sauna in the basement of the Centreway Arcade that provided a haven for men looking for sex with men.

The sauna was established by Michael Bucchi, who arrived from Italy in 1956 for the Melbourne Olympic Games. As a masseur and a 'physical culture instructor', Bucchi soon realised that there was a market for gyms and physical training in Melbourne, so he decided to stay. Bucchi opened his first premises in the suburb of Hampton before moving to the city in 1957 and opening the California Health Studio. This later became the Continental Baths.

Bucchi described his gym and sauna as a place of safety for gay men but noted that the clientele included gays and straights.³⁶ This included some men who had sex with men but may not have identified as gay or bisexual – a group that had always existed on the fringes of queer life and came increasingly into focus with the emergence of HIV/AIDS in the 1980s. But there were also men who came to Bucchi's Continental Baths just

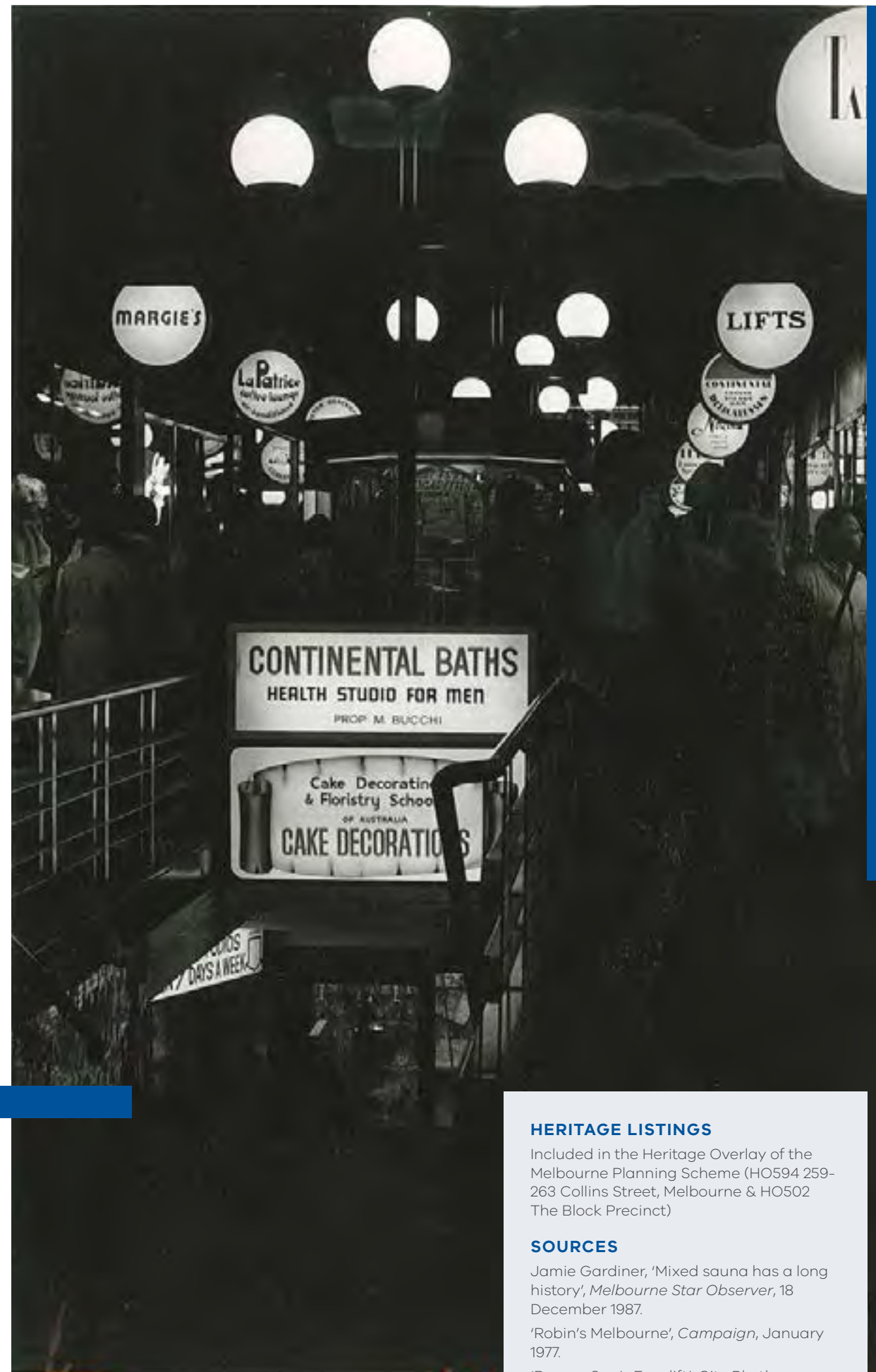
to use the gym; the facility being conveniently located for city workers. According to Bucchi, there was never any friction between the different groups of patrons.

When a journalist from the national gay newspaper *Campaign* visited Bucchi's Continental Baths in 1977, it was undergoing renovations. The gym was being reduced in size, the coffee lounge expanded, and showers were being upgraded. This ensured that the venue remained popular for its clientele which visited mostly at lunchtime and after work hours during the week. However, there were new saunas opening in Richmond and Caulfield, 'snapping at [Bucchi's] heels', *Campaign* reported.³⁷ Melbourne's CBD declined as a place for gay socialising, as one by one the hotels that had been welcoming of LGBTIQ+ people in the 1960s and 1970s closed down (see **Swanston and Collins streets precinct**).

In the late 1970s, Bucchi moved his business around the corner to Elizabeth Street, where he opened The Roman Spa, but the shift of cultural life away from the city soon saw Bucchi's business close too.

36 "Accusations Unjustified" – Bucci [sic]; and 'Around the Venues: Melbourne's All-Male Saunas', *Melbourne Voice*, 21 June 1985

37 'Robin's Melbourne', *Campaign*, January 1977.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme (HO594 259-263 Collins Street, Melbourne & HO502 The Block Precinct)

SOURCES

Jamie Gardiner, 'Mixed sauna has a long history', *Melbourne Star Observer*, 18 December 1987.

'Robin's Melbourne', *Campaign*, January 1977.

'Roman Spa's Facelift', *City Rhythm*, December 1982.

'Some like It Hot', *Klick!*, March 1980.

Miss Peninsula Sash

AUSTRALIAN QUEER ARCHIVES

The Miss Peninsula sash is a unique object representing the thirty-year history of the annual Miss Peninsula Quest drag pageant. The history of the event spans multiple eras and a variety of experiences of queer life, particularly cross-dressing.

As historian Lucy Chesser has shown, cross-dressing by women and men in Victoria can be traced back to the nineteenth century in two main forms. Some impersonators (as they were usually known) aimed to present themselves convincingly as the opposite sex. This was known as 'personation', 'impersonation' or 'masquerade' and was performed on stage for the entertainment of audiences, as well as in the streets as an expression of the individual's gender. The second main form of cross-dressing in nineteenth-century Victoria was highly theatrical 'drag', in which men dressed and performed as women for comedy. Drag became increasingly common after the mid-twentieth century and was practiced at private parties and in accommodating pubs, such as the **Sir Charles Hotham Hotel** (see citation) in central Melbourne.

The Miss Peninsula Quest was established in the early 1960s when a group of friends – many of whom were connected to The Boilers, Australia's longest running gay social group – decided to celebrate the Queen's Birthday long weekend with a series of parties on Victoria's Mornington Peninsula. Multiple houses were rented and over 50 people attended four separate parties over the three-day weekend. The first event of the weekend was a fancy-dress party on Saturday evening, followed by an investiture party on Sunday morning.

The highlight of the weekend was the Miss Peninsula Quest, which was held on the Sunday evening. The final party, named The Bitches Outfit, was held on Monday to analyse the weekend's activities.

Weekend events like the Miss Peninsula Quest, as well as social clubs like The Boilers and small shopfront venues such as the **Mae West Club signs** and **Trish's Coffee Lounge** (see citations), highlight the growing confidence of the pre-1960s kamp community in developing ways to socialise beyond private parties and discreet hotel gatherings.



Mae West Club signs

AUSTRALIAN QUEER ARCHIVES

The Mae West Club was one of Melbourne's first dedicated kamp-owned and operated venues. The signs from the club now held by the Australian Queer Archives are unique survivors of the late kamp and early gay liberation era in Melbourne, and the oldest known signs from an Australian kamp venue.

The Mae West Club, or Mae West Coffee Lounge, was a small evening coffee lounge and drag venue located at 12 Oban Street, South Yarra, next to Hawksburn Railway Station. Established in around 1969, the club ran until 1972. It was open on weekends and every weeknight except Mondays, offering coffee and basic food. The venue comprised a long, narrow single-fronted shop. It had booth seating and a small stage for drag shows, which were held principally on Sunday nights. The venue provided a rare kamp public space after pubs and bars closed at 10 pm.

During the late 1960s and early 1970s, there was a growing confidence in the Melbourne kamp community, which is evident in coffee shops like the Mae West Club, various bars in local hotels, and in the increasing number of organised social groups.

Kamp coffee shops like the Mae West Club also provided an early public venue for drag shows, which until that point had largely been performed only at private parties. The owner and proprietor of the Mae West Club was Robert Cameron, who often performed on the small stage in drag as Giselle. Other regular performers at the club included: Cherry Ripe, Cinnamon Brown, Stan Monroe, Holly Wood, Trixie, Ruby, Doug Lucas, Jullianne Deen, and Honey West. Many of these performers were early members of Les Girls (see **Les Girls Cabaret souvenir**), one of Melbourne's first commercial drag shows. They performed at the Mae West Club on their nights off from Les Girls, and regularly visited the club after their shows to socialise. The Mae West Club closed in early 1972, when Cameron joined Les Girls.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Personal communications from Stan Munro and Doug Lucas to Nick Henderson, Australian Queer Archives.

Les Girls Cabaret souvenir

PRIVATE COLLECTION

For almost a decade from 1970, Les Girls All-Male Revue entertained Melbourne at various venues in St Kilda. It had been running in Sydney for many years when the entrepreneur Sammy Lee decided to bring the show to Melbourne. It first opened at the Ritz Hotel at 169 Fitzroy Street, St Kilda, then at the nightclub Olivia's on the Upper Esplanade, and later at Bojangles, a nightclub on the Lower Esplanade.

This item is an example of the merchandise that people could buy as a souvenir – a card folder containing a photo of a group of friends taken on the night and available for purchase. The cover promotes the Les Girls show as a fun night out: 'Where every night is New Year's Eve'.

Les Girls was a drag show with sumptuous costumes, miming, and choreography. It attracted crowds of straight people, who travelled from Melbourne's suburbs to see something a bit different. 'Every night is New Year's Eve' was the promise of Les Girls. Many of the performers over the years were drag queens, while others described themselves as transsexuals – but all of them were entertainers.

The aim of Les Girls was to entertain and thrill the audience, who would find it hard to believe that the performers were not women. The performers were continuing an older tradition of male entertainers 'passing' as women, though they were open about the fact that they were 'all-male'.

Negotiating the laws and policing practices of the time presented challenges. In Sydney, appearance seemed to matter; it was common for performers to wear make-up but not dresses while going to work, but they could wear what they liked on their way home. In Melbourne, the performers were identified as entertainers and felt freer to dress however they wanted in public.³⁸

The Les Girls shows became increasingly opulent, and increasingly expensive to stage. As social, sexual and entertainment mores changed, the tagline of 'all-male revue' was often assumed to promise male strippers, to the disappointment of some.

For many of the performers the show provided steady work and a chance to explore their own identities. For the audiences that travelled to St Kilda from the suburbs, Les Girls provided a slightly risqué night out. The show, and its memorabilia, reflect the emergence of a new public femme, camp, trans and gender diverse culture.



³⁸ According to performer Debra Le Gae, when she was performing in Sydney's Les Girls the police enforced arbitrary rules: 'you could go to work with your makeup on, but not with your hair up ... and you'd have to have a check shirt on – but you could go home in whatever you liked!'. In Melbourne, management 'registered us with the Police, so we could walk the streets dressed up as women'. Quoted in 'Les Girls All Male Review', *Focus*, August 1992.

HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Jay Watchorn, 'Les Girls is real show-biz', *Campaign*, September 1977.

'Les Girls All Male Review', *Focus*, August 1992.

Beats Map

AUSTRALIAN QUEER ARCHIVES

In the collection of the Australian Queer Archives is a large map of Melbourne on which the locations and names of around two dozen Melbourne beats are noted. The map dates to the early 1970s and was on display for many years on the wall of the various clubrooms operated in the 1970s by the early gay rights group Society Five. The map is significant as a rare item of documentary evidence for a type of knowledge that was often only transmitted by word-of-mouth and is remembered inconsistently, if at all.

Beats are places where men who were attracted to other men could meet each other. Parks, beaches and public toilets are common locations – anywhere that a man could plausibly hang around waiting to see what opportunities might appear. The map, described by its anonymous creator as a ‘beginner’s guide to Melbourne’, is evidence of the number and geographical spread of Melbourne’s beats in the 1970s. The sites identified on the map range all over metropolitan Melbourne, from the Royal Australian Air Force base in Laverton and Footscray in the west, to Essendon in the north, Camberwell and Burwood in the east, and St Kilda, Mordialloc and Dandenong in the south. Around twenty suburbs are included in total.

For many men who had sex with men (only some of whom identified as homosexual, bisexual, camp or gay) beats were an integral part of their lives. They were places not only for sex, but also for meeting, chatting and socialising. Oral histories in AQuA’s collection contain stories of how meeting someone at a beat might lead to a romantic relationship or provide an introduction to the private social world of queer men. They could also be places of danger – targets of police entrapment and ‘poofier-bashers’.

Many of those who frequented beats for sex – commonly self-described as ‘beat-bashers’ – became quite attached to these places, just as people might have a favourite pub or coffee shop. This fondness is evident in the names for various beats that are on the map. The names are affectionate and often jokey, such as Fairy Dell, Spanish Mission, the Caulfield Intercourse, the Flowerpot and, at Melbourne Cemetery, Stiffies.

HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Graham Carbery, ‘Some Melbourne Beats: A “Map” of a Subculture from the 1930s to the 1950s’, in Robert Aldrich and Garry Wotherspoon (eds), *Gay Perspectives: essays in Australian gay culture*, Department of Economic History, University of Sydney, 1992, pp. 131-140.

Wayne Murdoch, ‘Beats’ in Graham Willett, Wayne Murdoch and Daniel Marshall (eds), *Secret Histories of Queer Melbourne*, Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives, Parkville, 2011, pp. 37-40.



Le Guide Gris

AUSTRALIAN QUEER ARCHIVES

Le Guide Gris (*The Grey Guide*) is an international gay travel guide published by the Mattachine Society, a pioneering organisation for homosexual rights founded in Los Angeles in 1950. *Le Guide Gris* was the earliest gay travel guide ever published, with the first edition appearing in 1958. Nine editions were produced, the last appearing in 1972. It is a copy of this ninth edition that is in the collection of the Australian Queer Archives (AQuA). Listings in the guide include bars, nightclubs, saunas, beats, hotels and other establishments in countries as far-flung as Italy, Jamaica, and Japan, reflecting the growth of transnational gay networks and the booming gay travel market of the 1970s.

AQuA's copy of *Le Guide Gris* is unique. It is a much-loved and well-travelled copy believed to have been owned by a San Francisco gay man named Adam Tabacaru. What makes this copy particularly significant is the scope of venues listed and the owner's annotations, including contact names, logistical details, and brief opinionated personal reviews of particular venues. The Australian section of the guide includes extensive annotations and comments about Melbourne. Some of the venues and locations are well known to historians (the **Prince of Wales Hotel** – see citation; Fitzroy Gardens); some not otherwise known to historians (Hamburger Maxims, on St Kilda Road): some appearing with new details (Dive Bar, on the ground floor of the Hotel Australia, where the owner of the guide noted the presence of 'teddy boys'). AQuA's copy of the guide contains a business card for 'Michael I. Bucchi's Gymnasium & Health Studio', located in Centreway Arcade, 259 Collins Street, Melbourne (see **Bucchi's Continental Baths**). There are no references to women's or lesbian bars.

A commercial gay press did not appear in Australia until the publication of the magazine *William and John* from 1972. *Le Guide Gris* is the earliest and most detailed guide to places where homosexual men could seek each other out. The annotations in this particular copy highlight the individual voice and attitudes of one homosexual man and provide insight into the experiences of queer people in Victoria at that time.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Le Guide Gris, 9th edition, Mattachine Society, San Francisco, California, USA, 1972.

Trish's Coffee Lounge

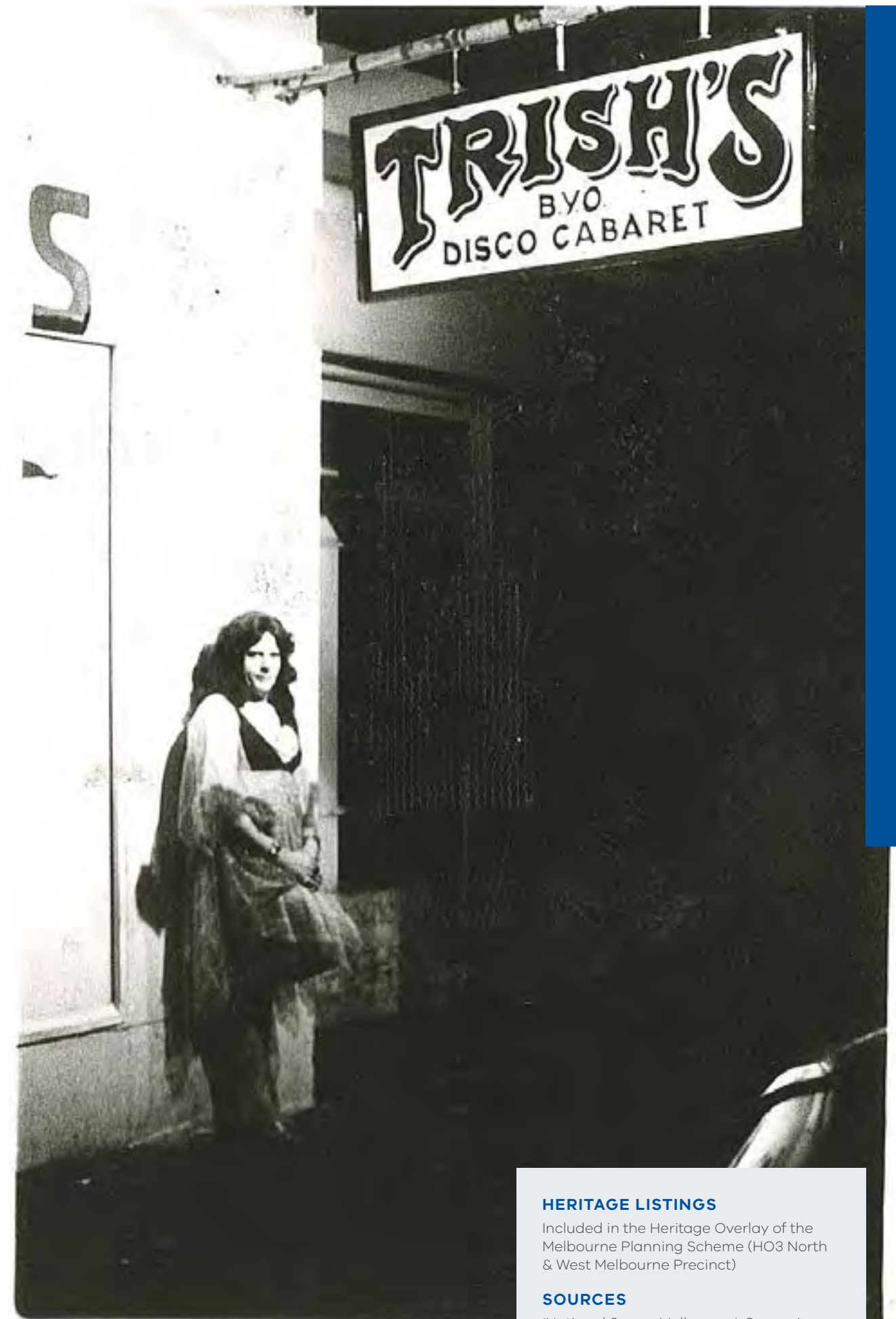
126 PEEL STREET, NORTH MELBOURNE

Trish's Coffee Lounge catered to LGBTIQ+ communities for over 20 years from 1975 to 1994 at 126 Peel Street, North Melbourne near Queen Victoria Market. Trish's first venue was the Coffee Cup in North Carlton until it was gutted by fire in 1975.

After many decades of gathering as discreetly as necessary in the hotels of Melbourne, a new gay scene started to emerge in the 1970s as small venues opened that reached out to and welcomed gay people. Trish's is significant as one of the earliest of these new gay establishments.

Trish's Coffee Lounge was tiny. It had two rooms; the front one with tables for diners and beyond this a stage area for drag performances. It is variously remembered fondly by its customers as a coffee lounge, cabaret venue, and disco. Others remember it as a drag bar. It offered something for everyone. Most importantly, Trish's welcomed everyone: 'be it a transsexual, a cross dresser, a burly truck driver, or a fledgling drag queen'.³⁹ The force behind Trish's was Jon Barry (1922–1990), a drag performer said to have spent many years in Hollywood honing his flamboyance. After his years running Trish's, Barry retired to Ballarat and died there in 1999.

Trish's Coffee Lounge existed in a particular historical moment between the era of discreet gatherings in mainstream hotels and cafes – a practice that dated back to the 1930s – and the soon-to-emerge gay scene, characterised by gay nights held once a week at inner-city pubs. People like Jon Barry seized on this moment with entrepreneurial flair to create a world of gay-centred entertainment that was inclusive and welcoming to anyone.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme (HO3 North & West Melbourne Precinct)

SOURCES

'National Scene: Melbourne', *Campaign*, 1977.

'Goodbye Trish', *Focus*, Spring 1999.

³⁹ 'Goodbye Trish', *Focus*, Spring 1999.

Annabel's

7 ALFRED PLACE, MELBOURNE

Built in 1885 for the German Club and later remodelled by the Naval & Military Club, 7 Alfred Place has historical and social significance for LGBTIQ+ communities as the site of the first bar in Melbourne to publicly promote itself as welcoming gay people: Annabel's.

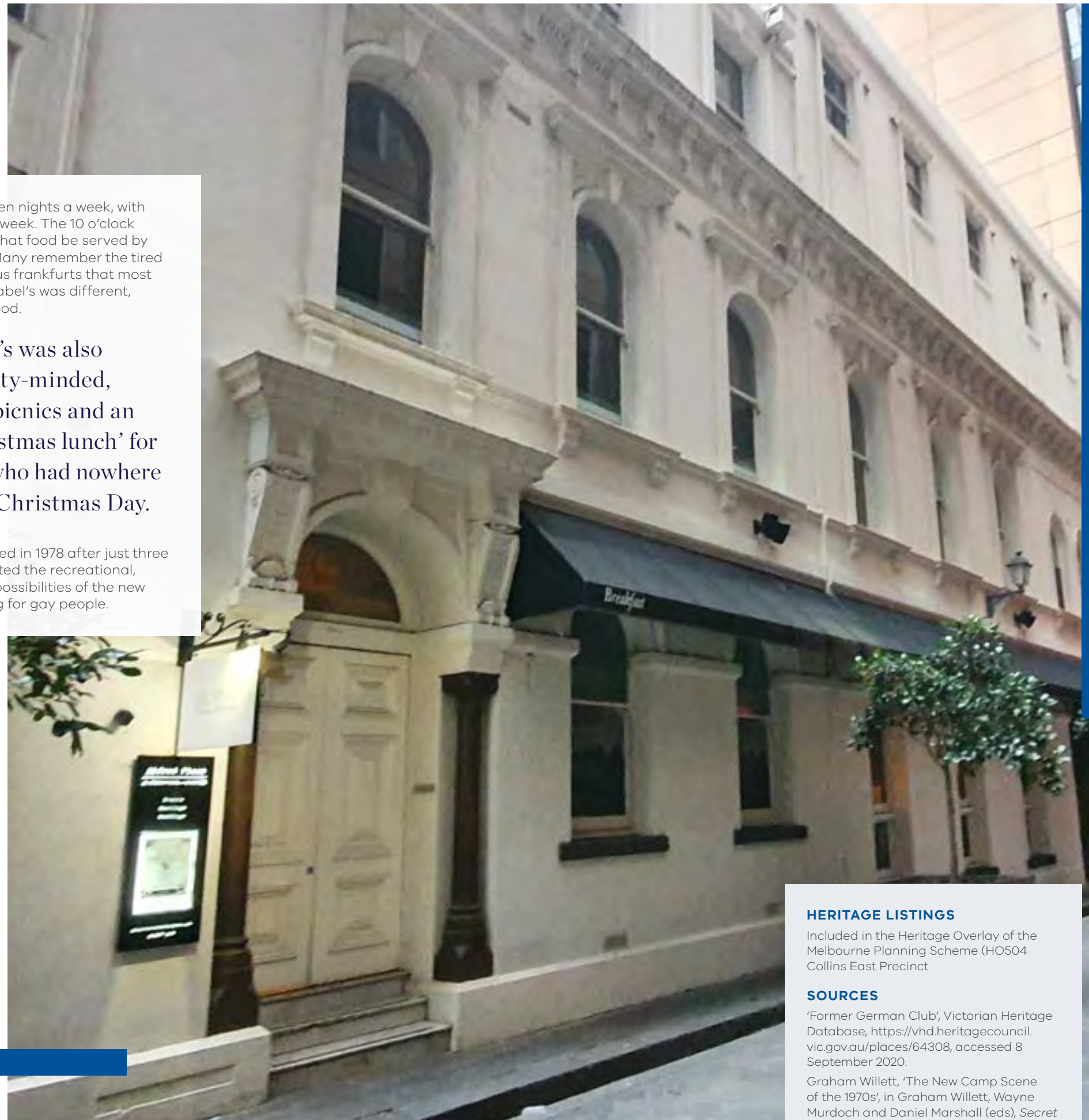
For those in the know, there were always places in Melbourne's CBD where queer people could gather together for a drink and to catch up. This was particularly true after World War II. These venues included cafes such as Liberty Belle, Cinders, Prompt Corner and hotels such as the Hotel Australia, the London Hotel, and Phair's Hotel. The relaxation of restricted hotel trading hours in 1966—ending the six o'clock swill—created more opportunities. By the mid-1970s, the emergence of gay pride meant that many people were more confident in themselves and looking for venues that were more than simply tolerant of queer people. This presented opportunities for entrepreneurially-minded 'promoters', as these business-owners were called.

Annabel's opened in Alfred Place in 1975, and was operated by Glen Waller whose family had run hotels for many years. The grand interior of the building featured a staircase that swept patrons to the main bar on the upper floor. There was an upstairs squash court that was open to Annabel's club members.

Annabel's was open seven nights a week, with a women's night once a week. The 10 o'clock licensing laws required that food be served by venues selling alcohol. Many remember the tired party pies and suspicious frankfurts that most licensees provided. Annabel's was different, providing high quality food.

Annabel's was also community-minded, organising picnics and an 'orphans Christmas lunch' for queer people who had nowhere else to be on Christmas Day.

Although Annabel's closed in 1978 after just three years, it had demonstrated the recreational, commercial and social possibilities of the new world that was emerging for gay people.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme (HO504 Collins East Precinct)

SOURCES

'Former German Club', Victorian Heritage Database, <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/64308>, accessed 8 September 2020.

Graham Willett, 'The New Camp Scene of the 1970s', in Graham Willett, Wayne Murdoch and Daniel Marshall (eds), *Secret Histories of Queer Melbourne*, Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives, Parkville, 2011, pp. 102-105.

Mandate

31 CARLISLE STREET, ST KILDA

Mandate was a gay bar and disco that operated on the upper floor of 31 Carlisle Street, St Kilda between 1980 and 1989. It has historical and social significance to the LGBTIQ+ community as a new type of full-time gay venue in the post-sexual revolution era.

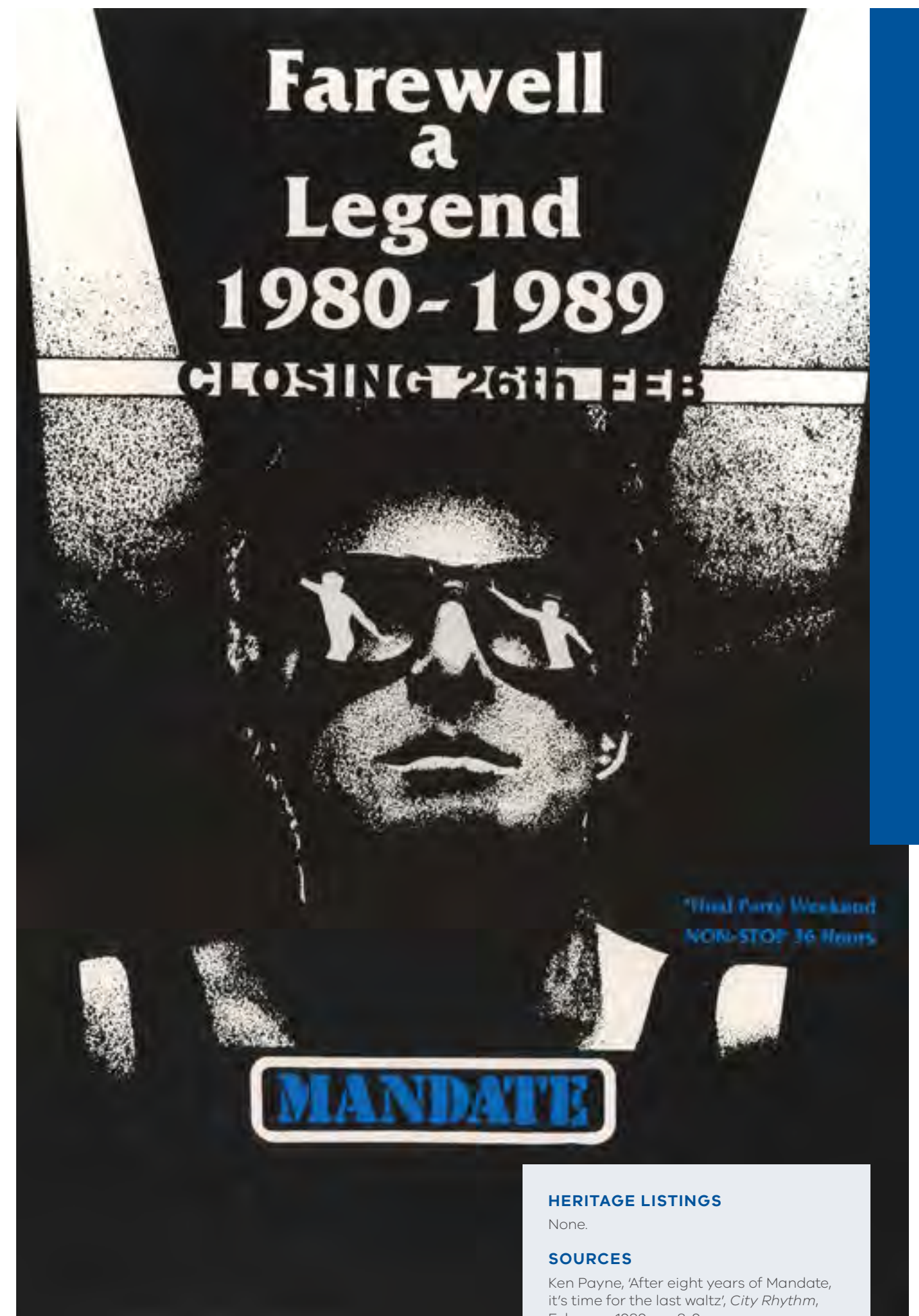
Mandate was not the first venue in Victoria to publicly promote itself as gay-owned and gay-staffed, but it did so much more openly than the few venues that had come before it. In the mid-1970s, some pub licensees started to designate one night a week – usually a quiet one – as a gay night. But Mandate broke out of this mould and proved that its model could work, attracting big crowds seven nights a week.

Almost immediately after its opening, and on and off through its existence, Mandate was the target of criticism from the local council, which tried on many occasions to have it closed down.⁴⁰ This was a time when an openly gay venue was not as attractive to local authorities as would later be the case.

From its earliest days, Mandate presented a very masculine vibe – one that was becoming popular amongst men in the gay world at that time. The ‘clone’ look (jeans and boots and flannel shirts, short hair and mustaches) was prominent, and the venue’s original decor included prison bars. But Mandate soon opened its doors to both men and women on Mondays and it hosted Club 31, a ‘girls only night’, on Tuesdays.

Among other things, management was prepared to spend money on making the venue appealing, regularly updating the décor, upgrading the light and sound systems, and expanding the dance floors. Long-standing pre-1970s traditions were remembered too, tapping into a sense of history. Queen’s Birthday and Melbourne Cup Eve were celebrated annually, as were national holidays like Australia Day and Anzac Day, reflecting the way the gay community was bringing itself into the mainstream.

⁴⁰ Ken Payne, ‘After eight years of Mandate, it’s time for the last waltz’, *City Rhythm*, February 1989, pp. 8–9.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Ken Payne, ‘After eight years of Mandate, it’s time for the last waltz’, *City Rhythm*, February 1989, pp. 8–9.

The Pup, ‘So Glad you were here’, *Brother Sister*, 30 Sept 1999.

Shed 14, Victoria Dock

DOCKLANDS

Shed 14 played host to the Alternative Lifestyle Organisation (ALSO) dance parties for Melbourne LGBTIQ+ communities from the 1990s-2000s. Shed 14, one of the largest remaining sheds in the Docklands, runs the length of Central Pier and was the main dance venue from 1993.

ALSO was formed in 1980 at a time when the LGBTIQ+ community were actively campaigning for the decriminalisation of homosexuality in Victoria. The organisation quickly garnered community and philanthropic support and provided an extensive range of services to LGBTIQ+ communities, particularly in aged care and housing for people with HIV/AIDS. One of ALSO's first fundraisers was GayDay in 1981, a forerunner of the Midsumma Carnival. It began holding dance parties from 1982 which quickly became the main fundraiser for the organisation.

Then managed by the Port of Melbourne, Shed 14 was made available to ALSO and the first dance party was held there in 1993. Earlier parties had been held in the 1980s in Sheds 9 and 10, including the Women's Only Warehouse (WOW) parties held as part of the annual Lesbian Festival. The extravagantly themed parties at Shed 14 attracted thousands of partygoers (more than 6,000 at their peak), with most staying well into the dawn. Choreographed and themed performances were held on multiple stages throughout the venue, with elaborate

light and laser shows. Performers included both professional dancers and community members, artistically directed by the likes of Tony Di Dio, Barry Kosky and Gillian Minervini. One of the most popular and longest lasting of the warehouse parties was Red Raw, which was first known as 'Rawhide', then 'Raw'. Red Raw was usually held on the Australia Day long weekend in January. Many of the ALSO dance parties became regular events on the warehouse calendar and included 'Winterdaze', 'Resurrection' and New Year's Eve – each aligning with particular holidays or events such as the Midsumma Festival.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Victorian Heritage Register as part of Victoria Dock (VHR H1720)

SOURCES

'ALSO: Celebrating 30 Years', *The Star*, 10 June 2010.

Tasty

325-331 FLINDERS LANE, MELBOURNE

The five-storey building at 325-331 Flinders Lane, Melbourne was constructed in 1907 as a store, office building and showrooms but the building is the site of a significant event in the LGBTIQ+ history of Victoria: the Tasty Night Club Raid.

Tasty was a Saturday night dance club that operated at the rear of the Commerce Club at 331 Flinders Lane in the 1990s. It welcomed all comers but was particularly well attended by LGBTIQ+ people. At 2.10 am on Sunday 7 August 1994, around forty police officers raided the club looking for drugs. Over 460 patrons were strip searched over three hours. Those caught up in the raid described being dragged and frogmarched around the venue, screamed at, abused and bullied, humiliated and intimidated, separated from their friends, forced to stand against walls with their hands up for half an hour or more, stripped and searched in front of other people, and forced to give their names and addresses, before being bundled out the front door, many still only half-clothed. As with the police action at **Black Rock Beach** (see citation) in the 1970s, there was widespread condemnation of the behaviour of police at Tasty from the political mainstream. But this time, even Jeff Kennett, the then Liberal Party premier, was prepared to publicly express his reservations, describing the event as 'disturbing and extreme'.⁴¹

However, it was the response from the community that was most significant. While most of those targeted in the raid were prepared to submit to the police behaviour on the night, some were determined to respond. An action group was formed, COPIT (Casualties of Police Intimidatory Tactics), but rather than holding demonstrations, the group opted for a court challenge. By the mid-1990s, there were plenty of people with the skills, resources and confidence to stand up publicly and to work within the system to get redress. There were also public officials, including the Deputy Ombudsman and the County Court judge, who were prepared to accept that queer people had a right to fair treatment. The court found that the police had behaved 'unreasonably' and ordered that \$10,000 of compensation be paid

to the complainant. This extended to all those affected by the event, totalling about \$6 million, which the government insisted that Victoria Police pay out of its own budget.

The raid at Tasty sparked meaningful change. Police-gay community liaison structures were put in place and in August 2014 the Acting Chief Commissioner of Victoria Police offered a public apology for the raid.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme (HO506 Flinders Lane Precinct)

SOURCES

Deputy Ombudsman (Police Complaints), 'Commerce Club: investigation of police raid on the Commerce Club (Tasty Night Club) on Saturday 7 August 1994', Government Printer, Melbourne, 1994.

Graham Willett, 'Tasty', in Graham Willett, Wayne Murdoch, Daniel Marshall (eds), *Secret Histories of Queer Melbourne*, Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives, Parkville, 2011, pp. 157-158.

Stephen MacLean (director), *The Tasty Bust Reunion*, Storyline Australia, 2004.

⁴¹ Tony Nicholls, 'Victoria Police apologise for 1994 raid on Tasty nightclub to 'make up for sins of the past'', 5 August 2014, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-08-05/victoria-police-apologise-for-1994-tasty-nightclub-raid/5649498>, accessed 1 October 2020.

Alexandra Gardens

ST KILDA ROAD, MELBOURNE

The stretch of Alexandra Gardens from St Kilda Road, past the rowing sheds and down to the Swan Street Bridge over the Yarra River has long been a place of gathering. As early as the 1930s, it was a popular place for couples to meet. Alexandra Gardens have since taken on new meaning for queer communities. Thousands of LGBTIQ+ people criss-cross Melbourne and make their way to the gardens each summer for the annual Midsumma Carnival, to join with community and celebrate the start of the Midsumma Festival. It's an opportunity to connect with friends and engage with the social, political, lifestyle, sporting, and community groups that set up stalls for the duration of the day. Stallholders and groups as diverse as Gays and Lesbians Against Discrimination, the Prostitutes Collective, Positive Women, Rainbow Families, Greek & Gay Network, Jewish Lesbian Group of Victoria and the Multicultural Gay Group have all participated over the years.

The mood at the Midsumma Carnival is joyous and celebratory, as people set up picnics under the trees lining Alexandra Avenue, by the main stage or under the palm trees. It's a chance to catch up with old friends and support the festival. Entertainment includes stage performances and 'Tea Dance'-style music after the sun goes down.

The origins of the Midsumma Carnival can be traced to the Alternative Lifestyle Organisation (ALSO)'s GayDay, which was held in the early 1980s. In 1988, in an initiative that was partly economic and partly to compete with Sydney's Mardi Gras, the Gay Business Association – with input from ALSO and the Victorian AIDS Council – created the Midsumma Festival. The event was first held in 1989, with a Carnival Day later staged in St Kilda.

Carnival Day was first held at Alexandra Gardens in 1995. The crowd of 70,000 people enjoyed a line-up that included lube wrestling, all-day bootscooting and the much-loved Dog Show.

After its many ups and downs and various incarnations, the Midsumma Festival, sometimes only held together by volunteers, has now grown into an established and consistent celebration of Melbourne's LGBTIQ+ arts and culture. Its history and meaning to queer communities is strongly reflected in the location of the Midsumma Carnival in the Alexandra Gardens.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Victorian Heritage Register as part of Domain Parklands (VHR H2304)

SOURCES

'Midsumma Milestones', <https://www.midsumma.org.au/about/midsumma-milestones>, accessed 9 September 2020.

Builders Arms Hotel

211 GERTRUDE STREET, FITZROY

The Builders Arms Hotel has been a popular gathering place for Melburnians since the 1850s and has particular meaning as a social and political gathering place for Aboriginal people in the mid-twentieth century. The hotel also has an important connection to queer communities. For almost ten years between 1995 and 2005, it was home to a weekly queer event known as Q+A, or Queer and Alternative.

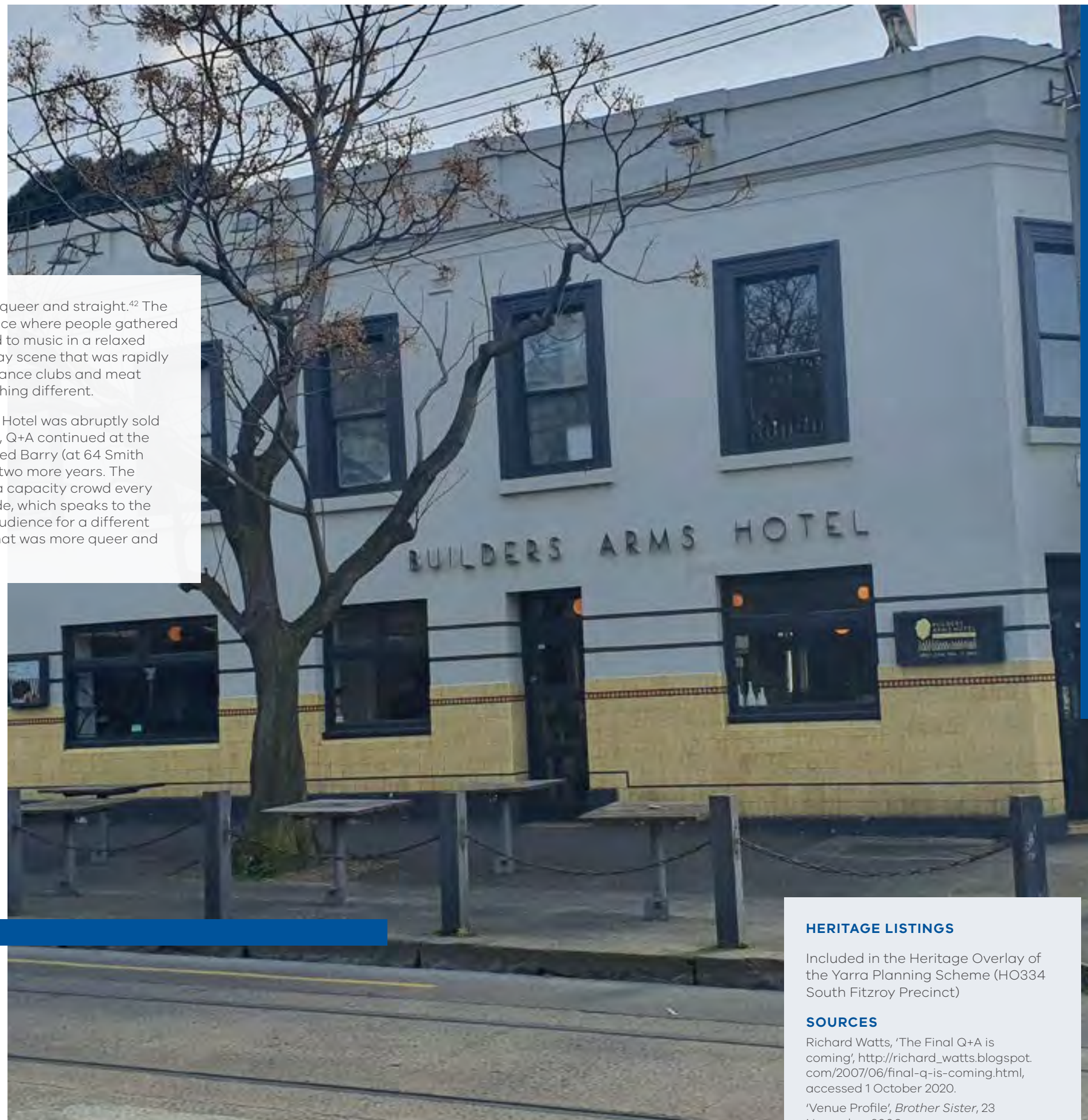
Q+A was the initiative of Richard Watts, Pete Kung and their friends, who wanted a new kind of venue for Melbourne queers. After a very brief stint in the city, the event moved to Thursday nights at the Builders Arms Hotel. Watts remembers thinking that if Q+A lasted for only six months and only friends turned up, it would still be worth it. In fact, within a few months standing in the long queue to get in was part of the experience.

The hotel itself was an essential part of what Q+A was. It had a strong sense of history, as a popular local pub and gathering place for different groups. It provided a large space and in the pre-gentrified Fitzroy of the 1990s, the pub was grungy and retro.

There was a huge bar, a dance floor with mirror balls, a pool table and an outdoor courtyard. The Q+A crowd was encouraged to be themselves – to ‘dress up, dress down, dress sideways’ and to

bring their friends, both queer and straight.⁴² The hotel was the kind of place where people gathered with friends and listened to music in a relaxed pub environment. In a gay scene that was rapidly homogenising around dance clubs and meat markets, this was something different.

When the Builders Arms Hotel was abruptly sold without warning in 2005, Q+A continued at the nearby venue A Bar Called Barry (at 64 Smith Street, Collingwood) for two more years. The event was attended by a capacity crowd every week for almost a decade, which speaks to the fact that there was an audience for a different kind of gayness – one that was more queer and alternative.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Heritage Overlay of the Yarra Planning Scheme (HO334 South Fitzroy Precinct)

SOURCES

Richard Watts, ‘The Final Q+A is coming’, http://richard_watts.blogspot.com/2007/06/final-q-is-coming.html, accessed 1 October 2020.

‘Venue Profile’, *Brother Sister*, 23 November 2000.

Thanks to Richard Watts for his assistance with this citation.

SOCIAL LIFE, RECREATION AND GATHERING PLACES

161

SPIRITUAL AND CULTURAL LIFE



St Francis' Church

326 LONSDALE STREET, MELBOURNE

St Francis' Church is one of the oldest churches in Melbourne and was the first Catholic cathedral. Building commenced in 1841, just six years after the colonial settlement was first established on the banks of the Yarra River. It has meaning to Victoria's LGBTIQ+ communities as the site of two queer marriages in the colonial period. In both cases, the groom was dressed and living as a man, but had been raised as a woman. There is no suggestion that the priests officiating these ceremonies were aware of the grooms' sex assigned at birth.

These historic unions were Edward de Lacy Evans to Mary Delahunty in 1856 (see **Photographic portrait of Edward de Lacy Evans** for full account) and Bill Edwards to Lucy Minehan in 1900.

Bill Edwards was born Marion Edwards in 1874 in Murchison in rural Victoria. By the age of 12 she⁴³ had been put to work as a domestic. Bored by this and looking for a way out, Edwards opted not for the usual route (marriage), but for escape.

In 1896 'Marion' started living as 'Bill' and left home, working as a station hand. It was hard work, Edwards said later, but it paid better than female wages by a long shot. Edwards learnt to shoot, wrestle, and shear sheep.

Edwards wrote a popular autobiography about their life, much of which is historically implausible, and described as 'fanciful' in the *Australian Dictionary of Biography*. In the memoir, Edwards claims that their marriage to Minehan was one of convenience. However, Edwards was still living

with Minehan five years later when he was caught trying to break into a hotel at 3am. He escaped to Queensland before he could be tried, only to be turned in to the police, at which point his so-called "true sex" became public knowledge.

The trial that followed in Melbourne was a sensation and Edwards, far from exhibiting any shame, set out to enjoy his 15 minutes of fame. He performed in a side-show as a 'she-male' before retiring to run a pub in West Melbourne and spent most of the remainder of his life wearing male attire, although his sex assigned at birth was publicly known. Bill Edwards died, a respected member of his local community, in 1956.

The circumstances and meaning of these two marriages are not easy to unpack, and historians do not agree in their interpretations of the surviving sources, particularly regarding Edwards's life. At the time, social concern was with the apparent fraud and deception involved, rather than any gender or sexual deviancy. The unions are nonetheless significant as very public documented cases of gender nonconformity, sexual diversity, and queer marriage in the earliest surviving Catholic church in Victoria.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR H0013)

SOURCES

Lucy Chesser, "When Two Loving Hearts Beat as One": same-sex marriage, subjectivity and self-representation in the Australian case of Marion-Bill-Edwards, 1906–1916', *Women's History Review*, 1 November 2008, Vol. 17, Issue 5, pp. 721–742.

Marion Edwards, *Life and Adventures of Marion-Bill-Edwards: the most celebrated man-woman of modern times: exciting incidents, strange sensations, told in the graphic manner by herself*, Melbourne, c. 1907.

Mimi Colligan, 'Edwards, Marion (Bill) (1874–1956)', *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, National Centre of Biography, Australian National University, <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/edwards-marion-bill-12901/text23305>, published first in hardcopy 2005, accessed online 22 September 2020.

'St Francis Catholic Church', Victorian Heritage Database, <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/772>, accessed 10 September 2020.

43 Through the course of their life, and in their writing, Edwards used both male and female pronouns. This citation follows the range of pronouns used by Edwards, as well as the contemporary 'they/them' to respectfully acknowledge the complexity of their gender nonconformity.

St Peter's Eastern Hill

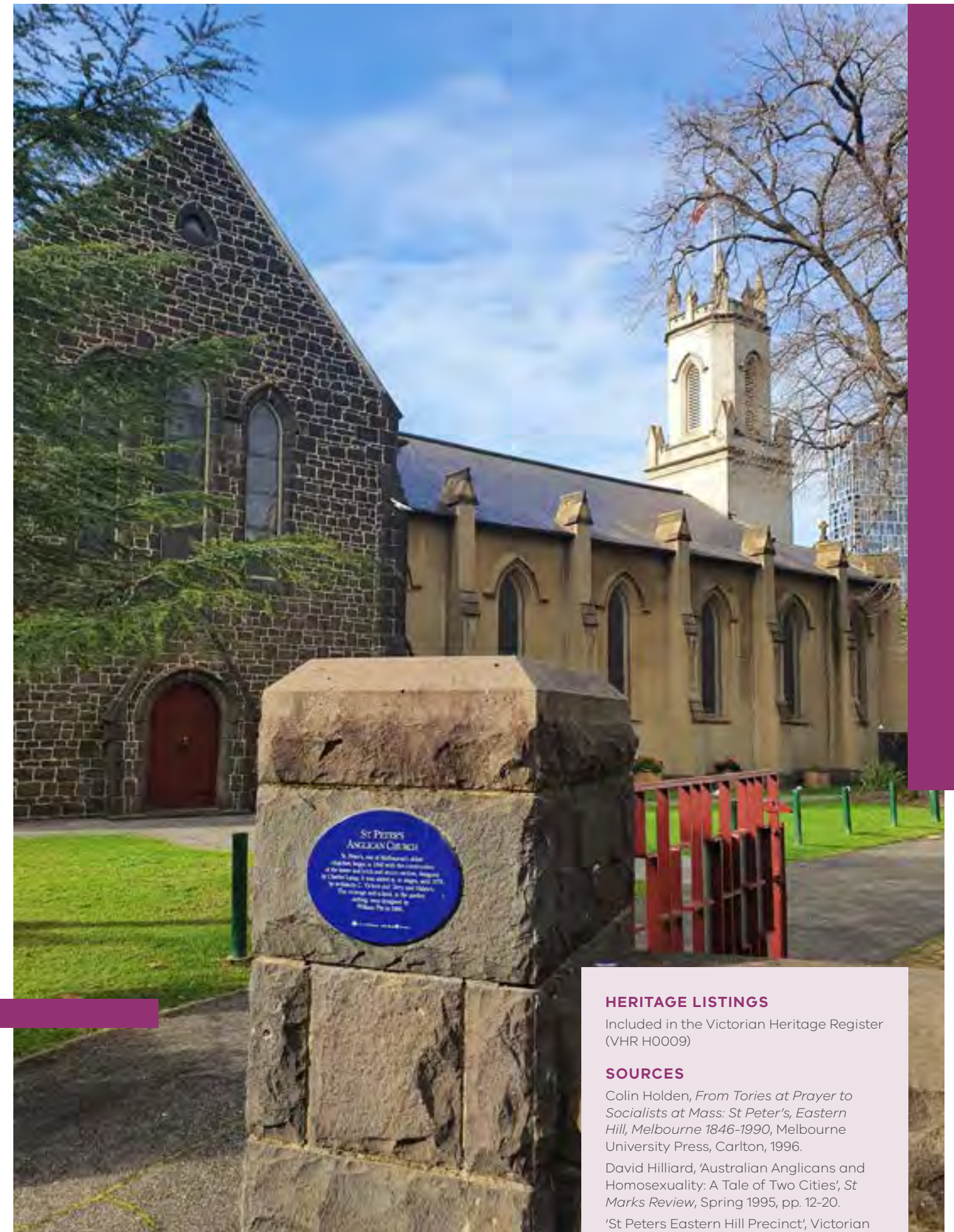
15 GISBORNE STREET, EAST MELBOURNE

St Peter's Eastern Hill Anglican Church stands at the corner of Gisborne and Albert streets in East Melbourne. The church dates from 1847 and is one of the few buildings in Melbourne that predates the goldrush. The church is important to LGBTIQ+ communities for its longstanding welcoming and supportive stance.

From its beginnings, St Peter's embraced the High Anglican and later Anglo-Catholic traditions, expressed in the use of vestments, incense and the High Mass. High Church traditions and rituals, such as those practiced at St Peter's, could be described as theatrical and flamboyant, and have held appeal for many queer men.

As well as being a place of welcome, safety and pleasure for Melbourne's Anglican homosexuals, St Peter's has a long history of concern for social justice and Christian socialism. The vicar at St Peter's from 1926 to 1964 was Farnham Maynard, whose social and political radicalism brought him to a position of understanding of kampf women and men. Maynard's thoughts about homosexuality are made clear in his papers, which are preserved in the church's archive. He wrote of homosexuality as 'this trouble' – a long way from the fire and brimstone condemnation of the mainstream of Christianity – and he argued that homosexuals were 'God's children too and not at all responsible for their condition'. Society's attitude, he thought, was 'rather unfair'.⁴⁴

St Peter's was never as activist or public in its support for LGBTIQ+ people as its neighbouring parish, St Mark's Anglican Church in Fitzroy (see citation). Nonetheless, the combination of a rich liturgical tradition with a strong commitment to social justice has made St Peter's especially attractive to LGBTIQ+ believers.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR H0009)

SOURCES

Colin Holden, *From Tories at Prayer to Socialists at Mass: St Peter's, Eastern Hill, Melbourne 1846-1990*, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 1996.

David Hilliard, 'Australian Anglicans and Homosexuality: A Tale of Two Cities', *St Marks Review*, Spring 1995, pp. 12-20.

'St Peters Eastern Hill Precinct', Victorian Heritage Database, <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/368>, accessed 10 September 2020.

⁴⁴ This and following paragraph: Wayne Murdoch, *Kampf Melbourne in the 1920s and '30s: trade, queans and inverts*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK, 2017, p. 47.

Gladys Moncrieff's Gown and Gloves

AUSTRALIAN PERFORMING ARTS COLLECTION

This gown and these gloves were worn by Gladys Moncrieff in the variety show 'Many Happy Returns' that toured Australia and New Zealand in 1959. The items were donated by her 'secretary and companion' for over 40 years, Elsie Wilson, to the Australian Performing Arts Collection in 1978. They have particular importance as a reminder of an LGBTQ+ performing arts icon.

Gladys Moncrieff (1892–1976) – 'Our Glad' as she was popularly known – was a famous stage and recording star in Australia and internationally, particularly in the 1920s and 1930s. Moncrieff's use of 'companion' to refer to Elsie Wilson spoke volumes to those attuned to its romantic implications. They met in 1930 and were inseparable, sharing their professional and domestic lives until Moncrieff's death in 1976. Wilson would accompany Moncrieff to her performances and wait in the wings. On opening nights, she would give Moncrieff a little kick in the shins for good luck just before she went on stage.⁴⁵

When Moncrieff retired in the 1960s, she and Wilson moved to the Isle of Capri off Queensland's Gold Coast. Moncrieff described their house as 'airy and comfortable':

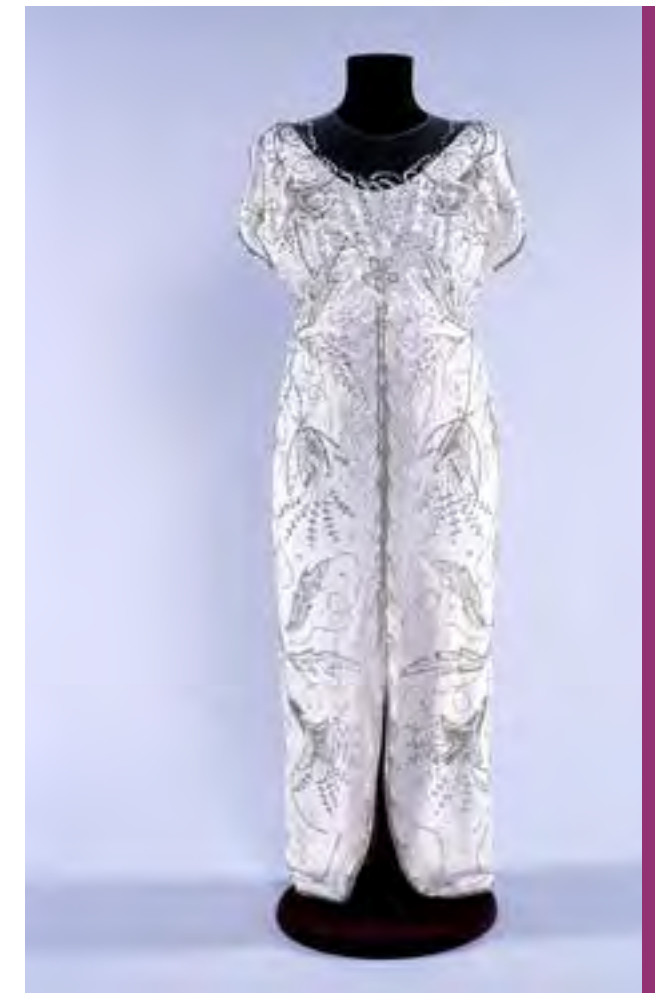
My friend and companion, Elsie Wilson, has helped me to make a tropical garden, with hibiscus, exotic trees and plants that create an unmistakably Queensland atmosphere. Here we entertain relations and old friends who visit the Gold Coast from southern States.⁴⁶

Moncrieff was very generous to her fans, who were, in turn, devoted to her. In Melbourne she had a fan club known as the 'Gallery Girls'. They were mainly young women, many of whom were factory

workers. In 1922, when Moncrieff performed at Melbourne's Tivoli Theatre, the Gallery Girls waited all night and the following day to secure cheap seats for evening performances. In an illuminated address presented to her on one occasion, they wrote:

Dear Gladys, we the Gallery Girls of Melbourne, perched aloft among the Gods, see most of the game. We claim to be the best judges, not particularly of the dramatic art, but of the artist. No one on the modern stage has so completely won our admiration, our warm appreciation and – we are sure you will value this most of all – our love.⁴⁷

Moncrieff's gown and gloves, now in the Australian Performing Arts Collection, represent the life and career of a woman in mid-twentieth-century Australia who was an icon and inspiration to other women of her generation and whose relationship with Elsie Wilson places her within the heritage of queer Australians.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Australian Performing Arts Collection, 1978.003.001 and 1978.003.002.

Gladys Moncrieff, *My Life of Song*, 1971, Rigby, Adelaide, 1971.

Helen Pausacker, 'Gladys Moncrieff, Elsie Wilson and the Gallery Girls', in Graham Willett, Wayne Murdoch and Daniel Marshall (eds), *Secret Histories of Queer Melbourne*, Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives, Parkville, 2011, pp. 57–59.

⁴⁵ Gladys Moncrieff, *My Life of Song*, Rigby, Adelaide, 1971, p. 81.

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 4.

⁴⁷ Cited in Helen Pausacker, 'Gladys Moncrieff, Elsie Wilson and the Gallery Girls', in Graham Willett, Wayne Murdoch and Daniel Marshall (eds), *Secret Histories of Queer Melbourne*, Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives, Parkville, 2011, pp. 57–59.

Order of Service, Christ's Community Church

AUSTRALIAN QUEER ARCHIVES

This Order of Service (a program of events for a religious service) was circulated at the Christ's Community Church service held on 15 September 1974. Christ's Community Church (CCC) was formed in the early 1970s, as LGBTIQ+ Christians around the English-speaking world worked to decide on how best to worship. Many stayed within the mainstream churches, sometimes forming discreet circles. Others withdrew, forming congregations of their own.

CCC began in October 1973 as a study group set up to explore the relationship between Christianity and homosexuality. The group read, among other things, Troy Perry's book *The Lord is My Shepherd and He Knows I'm Gay*, which had been published in the United States in 1972 and attracted much attention. Perry's visit to Australia in 1974 led to the formation of a national network of Metropolitan Community Church (MCC) congregations, in fellowship with Perry's US church of the same name. The Melbourne MCC congregation was founded by the study group established the previous year and held its first service on 21 October 1973 at St James the Great Anglican Church at 1 Newcastle Street, Thornbury.

In July 1976 four of the original members of the study group left MCC, formed CCC and asked Reverend John Willis to pastor for them. They were concerned about the financial demands of MCC and its lack of outreach work. CCC turned its efforts especially to probation work and social service in health and the courts.

Initially, CCC met for weekly worship at the Anglican Chaplaincy Students' Church in Carlton. But they were evicted from there and from a series of meeting spaces that followed, usually as a rejection of CCC's largely gay congregation. In 1979 John Willis decided to buy a building and set

up **The Hub** (see citation), where CCC was able to hold its weekly services. Willis was happy to marry same-sex couples in ceremonies that, although not legally recognised, served the purpose of public commitment to a relationship before family and friends and in the eyes of God.

The 1974 Order of Service in the collection of the Australian Queer Archives is important evidence of conventional Anglican worship, as practiced by a largely gay congregation. Bible readings, hymns, collective prayer, the offertory and the Apostles Creed all figure in the service.

C.C.C. 15/9/74. JW

1 A welcome to all those present tonight,
And a special welcome to those that are here for the first time,
Brothers and Sisters you are most welcome,
Everyone is welcome in this church.

2 Let us Pray. "Lord Jesus Christ be present now
Our Hearts in true devotion bow
Unseal our lips to sing thy praise
Our souls to thee in worship raise.

3 As the pray said "Unseal our lips" Let us sing
Hymn No. 12. Stand Up Stand Up for Jesus. CP 307

4 Our First Bible reading. LUKE 14 25 to 33

5 Let us rejoice with HYMN No. AMAZING GRACE (SV)

6 The second reading tonight is PHILEMON 1 v. 4-7

7 Let us Pray. Unprecedented prosperity in the west---
---for a new heaven and a new earth. Amen.

8 Hymn No: 13 What a friend we have in Jesus

9 It is with pleasure that I introduce our guest
Father King.

10 Hymn No. No 11 CROWN HIM WITH MANY CROWNS

11 Offertory Page 137 C.P. Offertory page 123. H.B.

12 Hymn No No 9 THE CHURCHES ONE FOUNDATION.

13 Let us Pray together. THE LORDS PRAYER

14 Our final Hymn No 101 Jesus I have promised

15 Apostles Creed repeat after me, ← PLEASE STAND CP 54

16 Let us all Stand For the Benediction I Thes 5.23 Page 195

HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

'LGBTQ Religious Archives Network: John Willis Papers', <https://lgbtqreligiousarchives.org/collections/willis-john-papers>, accessed 15 September 2020.

Thanks to John Willis for his assistance with this citation.

International Bookshop

17 ELIZABETH STREET, MELBOURNE

The International Bookshop was founded in 1933 by the Communist Party of Australia (CPA) to make radical readings available to wide audiences. It closed in 1993, two years after the CPA itself ceased to exist. In its 60-year history, the bookshop moved to various locations in Melbourne's central business district, but for much of its existence the International Bookshop could be found upstairs at 17 Elizabeth Street, where it set up shop in 1960. Its importance in terms of LGBTIQ+ history begins in the late 1970s.

As the CPA embraced new left ideas and the social movements of the late 1960s (such as women's liberation, Black Power and environmentalism), the bookshop's offerings expanded to keep up. When gay liberationists joined the struggle for a better world, this movement too was embraced.

Books relevant to the movement, though, were a problem. There were so few of them. When Melbourne's Gay Teachers and Students Group produced a bibliography in 1976, it found only several dozen works of fiction (going back to the 1890s) and a smaller number of non-fiction works and gay liberation journals. But the movement, both in Australia and overseas, moved steadily into publishing. In 1974, Adelaide gay liberationists established a book-order mail service known as the Dr Duncan Revolution Bookshop. When that

enterprise ran into financial trouble in 1977, the International Bookshop stepped in and purchased its stock, shipping it to Melbourne.

Until the opening of Hares & Hyenas in 1991 (see **Hares & Hyenas bookshop and performance space**), the International Bookshop was almost the only place to buy LGBTIQ+ fiction, history, and politics, both local and international, bringing the wider gay world and its ideas to Melbourne.

In 1996, the New International Bookshop opened at Trades Hall (see **Trades Hall Plaques**) to carry on the tradition of radical bookselling in Melbourne.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Interim controls applied July 2020 to May 2021 to include in the Heritage Overlay of the Melbourne Planning Scheme (HO1246 Former Excelsior Chambers) until a decision is made regarding permanent inclusion in the Heritage Overlay.

SOURCES

Ken Norling, 'International Bookshop', Encyclopedia of Melbourne, <https://www.emelbourne.net.au/biogs/EM00760b.htm>, accessed 15 September 2020.

St Mark's Anglican Church

250 GEORGE STREET, FITZROY

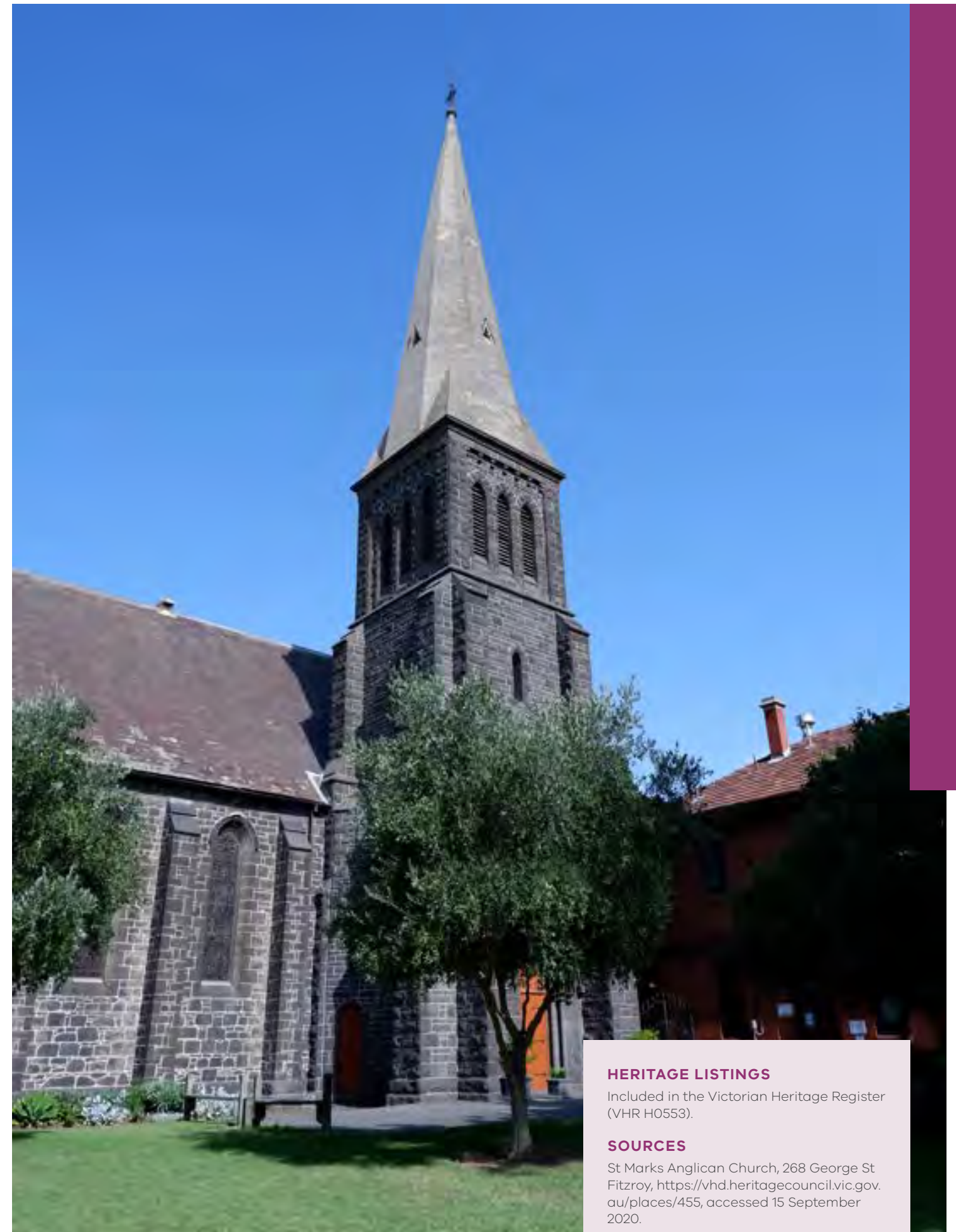
St Mark's Anglican Church, built from 1853 in early English Gothic style, is of architectural, historical, aesthetic and social significance to the State of Victoria. It is a remnant of the early growth of Fitzroy, Melbourne's first suburb, and has a strong history of providing social welfare support and facilities for the local community. The church also holds important meaning for its longstanding mission to support LGBTIQ+ people, especially during the AIDS crisis.

A church in the Anglo-Catholic tradition like **St Peter's Eastern Hill** (see citation), St Mark's Anglican Church has long held attraction for queer believers. In 1980 St Mark's appointed a social worker, Peter Burke, to run emergency relief and a community lounge. From there, the church began a more active collaboration with its surrounding communities. It hired out its hall to gay groups for meetings at a time when many organisations found that idea objectionable or too controversial. A fundraiser for *Gay Community News* was hosted there in May 1980, nearly a year before decriminalisation was implemented in Victoria.

Beginning in the mid-1980s, St Mark's ran an AIDS ministry, offering pastoral services and advocacy for people living with HIV and AIDS. Its annual AIDS requiem, held from 1986 and throughout the 1990s, was an important event for many people living with AIDS, drawing crowds of about 500 at its peak.

A new phase began in 2012 when the first Midsumma Mass was held at St Mark's. Commencing in 1996, the Midsumma Mass had previously been held at St Agnes' Anglican Church in 116 Booran Road, Glen Huntly.

In 2014, St Mark's vicar Father Stuart Soley delivered an apology to LGBTIQ+ communities. The church's steeple was lit up in the colour purple as a symbol of apology to LGBTIQ+ communities and to people with HIV/AIDS who have also been subjected to the same ill-informed stigmatisation by the church. The steeple remained lit up for the duration of the 20th International AIDS Conference, which was held in Melbourne that year.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR H0553).

SOURCES

St Marks Anglican Church, 268 George St Fitzroy, <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/455>, accessed 15 September 2020.

St Mark's Fitzroy, <https://www.stmarksfitzroy.com/>, accessed 15 September 2020.

Hares & Hyenas Bookshop and Performance Space

63 JOHNSTON STREET, FITZROY

During its almost 30-year history, Hares & Hyenas has developed into a much-loved bookshop with its own performance space, café and bar. Owners Rowland Thomson and Crusader Hillis met at the University of Melbourne in 1975, and first opened Hares & Hyenas at 135 Commercial Road, South Yarra in 1991. Hillis explains the name:

We came up with a name that took in everybody really. Hares & Hyenas comes from a book by John Boswell called *Christianity, Homosexuality and Social Tolerance*. You can't tell whether a hyena is male or female from looking at its genitalia and so when hyenas were mating they were often seen as homosexual, and there's a long association of hares with homosexuality. The name just came to Rowland one night; he literally woke up and said: 'Hares and Hyenas!'⁴⁸

Outlets in Fitzroy and Collingwood followed the first shop in South Yarra, and in 2006 it moved to its current location in Johnston Street, Fitzroy. The branches north and south of the Yarra River – Melbourne's age-old rivalry – sold very different stock, pointing to the emergence of a diversity in LGBTIQ+ life in the 1990s as expressed in style and consumption.

The changing locations of Hares & Hyenas have been matched by the shifting nature of the stock (cards, DVDs, zines and magazines as well as books) and audiences. The focus has always been queer – the plenitude of diversity, sexualities, sexes and genders that make up such a prominent part of Melbourne's contemporary

life. This was evident from the earliest days of Hares & Hyenas, when the shop started to stock and promote material about the transgender experience.

Queer Melbourne continues to gather at the Fitzroy institution for book launches and panel discussions. Small groups meet to discuss books and politics and culture. Film nights, spoken-word performances and burlesque are all part of its offerings.

Events during Midsumma, Melbourne Fringe, and the Melbourne International Comedy Festival keep Hares & Hyenas in the public eye. The bookshelves can be pushed aside to make space for large audiences. The walls display ever-changing exhibitions, while one corner is filled with information placed there by community organisations and community-oriented businesses.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Heritage Overlay of the Yarra Planning Scheme (HO334 South Fitzroy Precinct)

SOURCES

'About Us: Hares & Hyenas', <https://www.hares-hyenas.com.au/pages/1489-AboutUs>, accessed 15 September 2020.

Jac Tomlins, 'A safe and welcoming space...', <https://jacquitolins.com/2013/10/29/a-safe-and-welcoming-space>, accessed 15 September 2020.

48 Jac Tomlins, 'A safe and welcoming space...', <https://jacquitolins.com/2013/10/29/a-safe-and-welcoming-space>, accessed 15 September 2020.

The Metropolitan

NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA

The Metropolitan is an outfit that represents the flamboyant life and extravagant designs of Melbourne-born queer designer and performance artist, Leigh Bowery. The costume – full length satin with flowery motifs, complete with full fabric face and military style ‘kaiser’ helmet – was created by Bowery in 1988. The outfit’s most public outing was in 1993 when Bowery wore it to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York for the opening of an exhibition of paintings by renowned portrait artist Lucian Freud. The exhibition featured a number of large nude portraits of Bowery painted by Freud. Now held in the National Gallery of Victoria, *The Metropolitan* is a tangible connection to an Australian queer person who had great impact and influence on the international fashion and design scene.

Born in the Melbourne suburb of Sunshine in 1961, Bowery went to Melbourne Boys’ High School and then on to study fashion and textiles at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT). In 1980, at the age of 19 and bored with life in Melbourne, he left for London with a ‘suitcase and his sewing machine’. While there, he set about creating the flamboyant, garish persona he became known for as he revelled in the 1980s London underground and New Romantic club scene.

Bowery created hundreds of outlandish costumes. When adorned in one of his outfits, a full face of makeup and platform shoes, his 6’3” frame transcended into sculptural forms that explored and pushed the boundaries of traditional drag and camp to the extreme. His costuming was a major part of his performance art and drew both admiration and outrage, with his raw and grotesque performances at clubs, galleries and parties. On one memorable occasion, he glided through the audience in a full-length creation and gave ‘birth’, to an adult woman who had been strapped to his body underneath his costume.

Bowery embodied the shock value of his creations and his outlandish aesthetic and performance chipped away at the rigidity of the British upper class. A video from the late 1980s shows him wearing *The Metropolitan*, complete with helmet, to the luxurious Harrods Tea Room as he sits down for tea and scones.

Bowery collaborated with artists, musicians, filmmakers, choreographers and designers in fashion, dance and art. He was friends with Boy George, worked with the Michael Clark dance company and set up the popular Taboo nightclub in Leicester Square. He later went on to form the band Minty and his design influences can be seen in the works of Alexander McQueen, Vivienne Westwood and Gareth Pugh.

Bowery’s creations are now held in museum collections throughout the world and have featured at the 51st Venice Biennale, Victoria and Albert Museum, Museum of Contemporary Art and the National Gallery of Victoria.

Bowery died of AIDS in 1994 at the age of 34. Lucian Freud paid for his body to be flown back to his family in Victoria, where he is buried alongside his mother at the Macedon Cemetery.

In 2017, the legacy of Leigh Bowery was recognised by the City of Brimbank (which includes the suburb of Sunshine) in the naming of their new theatre complex The Bowery.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Hannah Schmidt-Rees, ‘Taboo – The Legend of Leigh Bowery’, *Perspex*, 4 March 2019, <https://www.per-spex.com/articles/2019/3/4/taboo-the-legend-of-leigh-bowery>, accessed 30 October 2020.

Hilton Als, ‘Life as a Look’, *The New Yorker*, 23 March 1998, <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1998/03/30/life-as-a-look>, accessed 30 October 2020.

Sue Tilley, *Leigh Bowery – The Life and Times of an Icon*, Hodder & Stoughton, 1999.

‘Welcome to The Bowery Theatre’, <https://bowerstacc.com.au/aboutus/>, accessed 30 October 2020.

‘The Clothes Show’, 1988, <https://youtu.be/om0MrCOXPcE>, accessed 30 October 2020.

The Rainbow Sash

AUSTRALIAN QUEER ARCHIVES

The Rainbow Sash has historical, social and cultural meaning as the core symbol of the Rainbow Sash movement of Catholic LGBTIQ+ people, together with their allies, calling for international action on gay rights and spiritual freedom. The movement publicly challenges the Catholic Church to embrace dialogue and radical change around its treatment of LGBTIQ+ people, and indeed in its whole approach to human sexuality, diversity and justice.

The central action, or ritual, of the movement brought Catholic LGBTIQ+ people together as people of faith and challenge. Starting in Melbourne in 1997, advocates attended Mass, participating in the service in the usual way, but wearing a highly visible rainbow-coloured sash over their left shoulder. Letters to the Catholic bishops and the media stated that the sash proclaimed wearers as 'Gay and Lesbian people who embrace and celebrate our sexuality as a Sacred Gift'.⁴⁹ They called the church to enter into dialogue with them and work together for justice and understanding.

Wearing the Rainbow Sash was a deliberately public action, and it forced the Catholic bishops to acknowledge the oppression, silencing and hypocrisy that the church had for centuries imposed on queer people. Advocates came forward publicly, rejecting the contracts of silence that allowed the church to maintain a veneer of tolerance and justice, while privately sacking LGBTIQ+ employees, lobbying governments against the rights and interests of gay people, and continuing to teach that same-sex loving was 'intrinsically evil'.

At the heart of the Rainbow Sash ritual was the moment of Holy Communion. Beginning in 1997 at St Patrick's Cathedral in Melbourne, those wearing the sash would line up for Communion in the usual way, and were refused the sacrament. Family members who came forward wearing the sash were also publicly refused. On Pentecost Sunday, 31 May 1998, around 60 people at St Patrick's were publicly refused Holy Communion by Archbishop George Pell. In Catholic culture worldwide this was unprecedented, and it created a media storm.

⁴⁹ 'Our Core Statement', <http://geoffreybaird.com/rsm/menus/history.html>, accessed 1 October 2020.

This incident also sparked a new public voice in the movement, as wider society observed Catholic oppression in action. LGBTIQ+ people were witnessed standing up publicly, as people of faith, and both exposing and challenging the church. The movement spread to Sydney and also to the United States, and ritual actions like the one at Pentecost in Melbourne continued for many years. The Rainbow Sash remains a highly recognisable symbol of LGBTIQ+ Catholics calling the church to justice and transformation.

HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

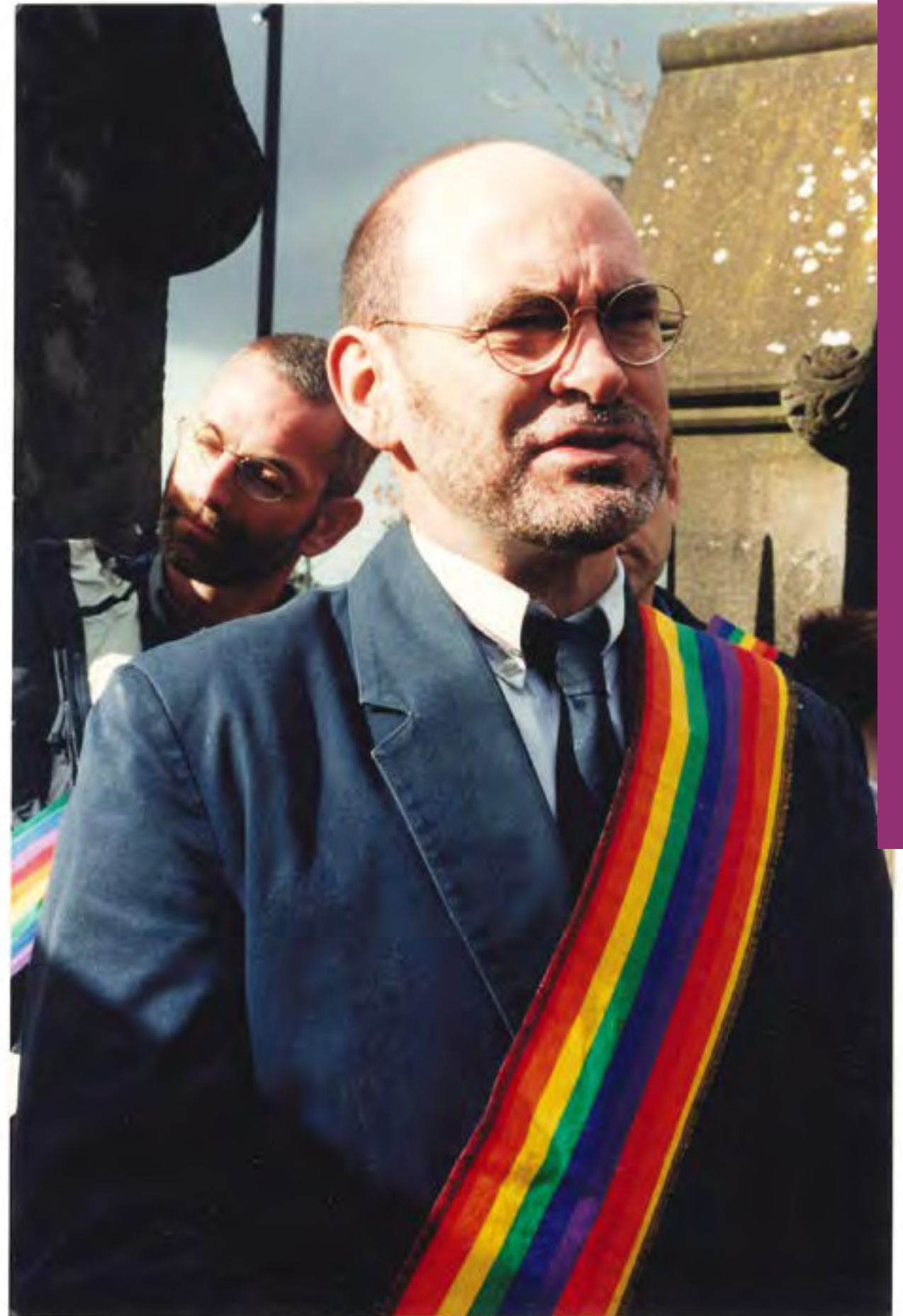
SOURCES

Michael Bernard Kelly, *Seduced by Grace: Contemporary Spirituality, Gay Experience and Christian Faith*, Clouds of Magellan Press, Melbourne, 2007.

'Our History', <http://geoffreybaird.com/rsm/menus/history.html>, accessed 1 October 2020.

'The Rainbow Sash Movement', www.rainbowsash.com, accessed 15 September 2020.

Thanks to the late Michael Kelly, co-founder and spokesperson for the Rainbow Sash, for his assistance with this citation.





SURVEILLANCE, PERSECUTION AND THE LAW

Parliament House

110-160 SPRING STREET, MELBOURNE

It is not the physical building that gives Parliament House its meaning to the LGBTIQ+ community, but what has occurred there over the past 170 years. It is a place where laws have been made and unmade, and proclamations have been issued which have shaped the lives and behaviours of all Victorians, including queer people.

For most of Victoria's history, the aim of laws and regulations relating to homosexual behaviour was to eradicate it by sending a very clear signal of disapproval and empowering the police and the courts to detect and punish it. Victoria came into existence in a constitutional sense in 1851, when it separated from the colony of New South Wales. Among the laws that Victoria inherited, the *Offences Against the Person Act 1828* prescribed what the Act called the 'abominable crime of buggery' a maximum penalty of death. Over the course of the next 110 years, laws approved by the Parliament of Victoria simultaneously reduced the severity of the penalties and expanded the scope of offences to which they were applied.

In 1919, again following the lead of the United Kingdom, an offence of gross indecency was legislated in Victoria. Parliamentary debate mentioned this only briefly and offered no real explanation for its introduction. The *Prostitution Act 1961* extended laws against soliciting for sex to homosexual men.

It is notable that this 1961 extension of the law was enacted just as the first discussions around the idea of decriminalising homosexuality were starting to be heard in Victoria. By 1977, the call for reform reached new heights (see **Black Rock Beach**) and in late 1980 parliament legislated to decriminalise homosexual acts, in what was widely described as the best law reform package anywhere in the English-speaking world.

For those who assumed that decriminalisation was the be-all and end-all for homosexual rights, the following decades were to be full of surprises. Parliament remained unexpectedly busy. Discrimination against homosexual people was criminalised, and debates erupted over whether single women (including lesbians) could access IVF, whether same-sex de facto relationships should be recognised in State law, and if children could be adopted by same-sex couples. New sexual identities brought their demands to the

table and gender identity became a category that the law was required to take into account. In 2000, discrimination on the grounds of gender identity or sexual orientation was made unlawful. Gender markers (male/female) were removed from drivers' licences. Requirements around surgery and divorce for gender affirmation were eliminated. Legislation allowed for people to change their gender on their birth certificate. From 2014, it was possible to have historical convictions for homosexual offences erased from the criminal record. In 2016, the Victorian parliament issued a formal apology to all those affected by previous discriminatory laws, with many community members previously convicted under such laws present in the Legislative Assembly chamber.

While all this was going on
in the corridors of power,
outside on the steps of
Parliament House gay
people and their friends
have gathered repeatedly
over the years to protest and
issue demands, and still do.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR H1722)

SOURCES

Graham Carbery, 'Towards Homosexual Equality in Australian Criminal Law – A Brief History', Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives, second edition, 2010, www.alga.org.au/files/towardsequality2ed.pdf, accessed 1 October 2020.

John Waugh, 'A Gang of Judicial Assassins': George Bateson and Colonial Sodomy Laws, in Graham Willett and Yorick Smaal (eds), *Intimacy, Violence and Activism: gay and lesbian perspectives on Australasian history and society*, Monash University Publishing, Clayton, 2013, pp. 27-33.

Letters of George Bateson

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE VICTORIA

In Victoria's State archives there is a remarkable cache of letters written by George Bateson, who was arrested and convicted of sodomy in late 1860. There are some 200 letters addressed to notable Victorians including the governor, premier, inspector-general of penal establishments, members of parliament, and lawyers. These rare documents provide powerful evidence of homosexual life and the impacts of mid-nineteenth century laws relating to sodomy.

The story begins on an evening in November 1860, when 19-year-old William Gardner went to the police to complain that the previous evening, when he was staying at a city hotel with George Bateson, he had been subjected to Bateson's sexual advances. The police asked Gardner to meet with Bateson again the following evening and when their sexual connection was sufficiently advanced, Gardner should cough twice. He agreed to the plan, and when Gardner coughed the police emerged from a closet in the hallway, catching the two men in the act.

Bateson was convicted of sodomy in 1860, but his death sentence was *recorded* rather than *pronounced*. In due course the Governor of Victoria commuted the sentence, as was usual for the crime, and instead sentenced Bateson to 15 years' hard labour, with the first three years to be spent in chains. In 1871, Bateson was released, having spent four years less in prison than his original sentence.

During and after his time in prison, Bateson wrote letters to the authorities to assert that he was innocent, falsely accused and the victim of a conspiracy. He demanded that this terrible miscarriage of justice should be reversed and a pardon granted to him.

Bateson was not the first man in Victoria to be convicted and sentenced in this way; nor was he the first to petition for redress. But the extent of his letters and the scope of the issues raised in them offer a remarkable insight into homosexual life in the mid-nineteenth century, such as how men might meet each other, and approaches to police and punish homosexual behaviour. Bateson's letters provide crucial evidence to expand our understanding of Victoria's queer past.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

John Waugh, 'A sodomy case in colonial Melbourne: The prison letters of George Bateson', *Journal of Australian Colonial History*, Vol. 20, 2018, pp. 83-102.

Letters of George Bateson, VPRS 266/PO, unit 399, 1886/672, Public Record Office Victoria.

Photographic Portrait of Edward de Lacy Evans

STATE LIBRARY VICTORIA

An 1879 photograph taken by Nicholas White used a type of 'trick' photography to show Edward de Lacy Evans dressed in both male and female attire of the period, in an attempt to tell the extraordinary, and sometimes speculative, story of their life.⁵⁰ While White took the photograph of de Lacy Evans in male attire, he manipulated a copy in which he placed de Lacy Evans's face on a body in female clothing. The photograph was patented by White in order to make money. This photograph is unsettling in its obvious exploitation of de Lacy Evans, but is historically and culturally significant for providing remarkable insight into one of Australia's earliest colonial stories of transgender life.

Edward de Lacy Evans arrived in Australia by ship from Ireland in 1856. They are listed in shipping records as travelling under the name Ellen Tremayne. Shortly after arriving in Australia, they assumed their male name and began living as a man, dressing in male attire.

Marriage certificates attest that they were married three times to women (see **St Francis' Church**) and worked across the Ballarat and Bendigo areas in a range of roles, including as a miner, blacksmith and labourer. They predominantly lived in Bendigo (then called Sandhurst).

In 1879, the year White's photograph was taken, de Lacy Evans began experiencing episodes of depression likely associated with a head injury sustained in a workplace incident, and was admitted to the Bendigo Hospital Lunacy Ward. After a period of more than 40 days when they refused to be bathed, de Lacy Evans was then transported to the Kew Lunatic Asylum and forcibly stripped, examined and publicly outed as a biological woman. The press sensationally reported on the story.

There is another photograph taken by White, now also in the State Library Victoria collection, that appears to show de Lacy Evans dressed in a gown in the hospital ward of Kew Lunatic Asylum. Traumatized and humiliated by these experiences, de Lacy Evans spent a few years following their release from hospital 'performing' at sideshows as a so-called 'man/woman'. For the last 20 years of their life, de Lacy Evans was an inmate in the Melbourne Immigrants' Home, where they were forced to wear female clothes and use the name Ellen. They died there in 1901.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Mimi Colligan, 'The Mysterious Edward/ Ellen De Lacy Evans: The Picaresque in Real Life', *The La Trobe Journal*, No. 69, Autumn 2002, pp. 59-68.

Laura Darling, 'Edward de Lacy Evans', *Making Queer History*, <https://www.makingqueerhistory.com/articles/2019/6/29/edward-de-lacy-evans>, accessed 10 September 2020.

⁵⁰ While historical sources use pronouns inconsistently to refer to de Lacy Evans, in this citation, the pronouns 'they/ them' have been used in order to tell Edward de Lacy Evans's story respectfully, and with dignity.

Mr Cleal's Letter

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE VICTORIA

In October 1901, Mr B. Cleal wrote to the Chief Commissioner of Police complaining about the large number of effeminate young men using 'various conveniences' for 'an evil of the most terrible description'.⁵¹ Mr Cleal's letter is part of a remarkable collection of documents held by Public Record Office Victoria that are valuable to LGBTIQ+ history and heritage in providing unparalleled insight into where and how beats operated in and around the city at that time.

By 'conveniences' Cleal meant public toilets, and he listed the busiest of them: the corner of Rathdowne and Victoria streets; Lansdowne Street, East Melbourne; under the viaduct opposite the Customs House in Flinders Street; at the rear of the old City Court in Little Collins Street; and under the viaduct at the foot of King Street. Cleal described in detail how these beats worked: 'One cannot enter but two or three of the above fellows rush in and on pretence of using same will pass some disgusting remark concerning one's person etc'.

The Chief Commissioner despatched one of his officers, Sergeant Canty, to investigate. Canty's report provides further detail and description of who he encountered at the public toilets. He reported that men 'known by the term "Pufters" [sic], are generally well dressed, sober, quiet in their manner and some of them very well connected'. Canty further noted about these men:

... it is often very difficult for the police to catch them offending, and if they do at any time make filthy or indecent overtures to any man, they believe him to be similarly inclined, but should they make a mistake the man insulted never thinks of giving any of them in charge [complaining to the police], but sometimes gives the offender a well-deserved blow or kick instead, of which the recipient never complains.

Sergeant Canty admitted that the problem had existed for some time. But, he added, 'I don't think the evil complained of is as great as said in attached [Cleal's letter]'. In reviewing the file,

Canty's supervisor noted that Cleal, 'appears to have given these resorts considerable attention'.

Much of the evidence for same-sex activity in Melbourne in the early twentieth century comes from court cases and sensationalist news reports. With their eyewitness accounts of the use of local beats, these documents in the collection of Public Record Office Victoria provide a more detailed, understated account, making them some of the more unusual and historically significant records in Melbourne's queer history.

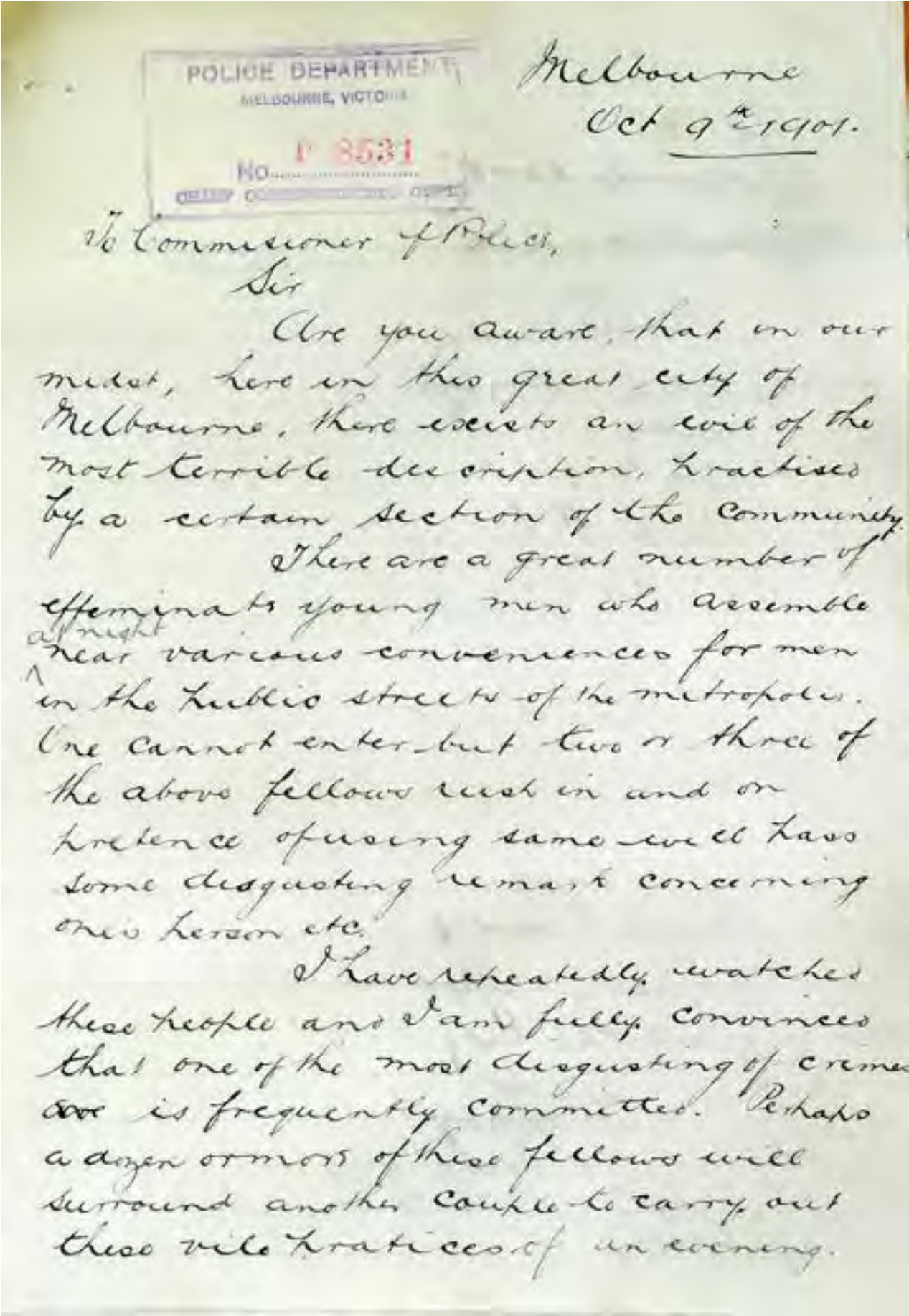
HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Inwards Correspondence Files, Victoria Police, VPRS 807/162, File P8531, Public Record Office Victoria.

Wayne Murdoch, 'Beats', in Graham Willett, Wayne Murdoch and Daniel Marshall (eds), *Secret Histories of Queer Melbourne*, Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives, Parkville, 2011, pp. 37-40.



⁵¹ Inwards Correspondence Files, Victoria Police, VPRS 807/162, File P8531, Public Record Office Victoria. All quotes are from this file.

John Morrison's Grave

YAKANDANDAH CEMETERY

Tucked away in the cemetery at Yackandandah in north-eastern Victoria is an unremarkable grave erected for John Robert Morrison in 1914. Mottled with the signs of its age, the grave is an enduring reminder of the life of a man who experienced the serious impacts of Victoria's nineteenth-century sodomy laws.

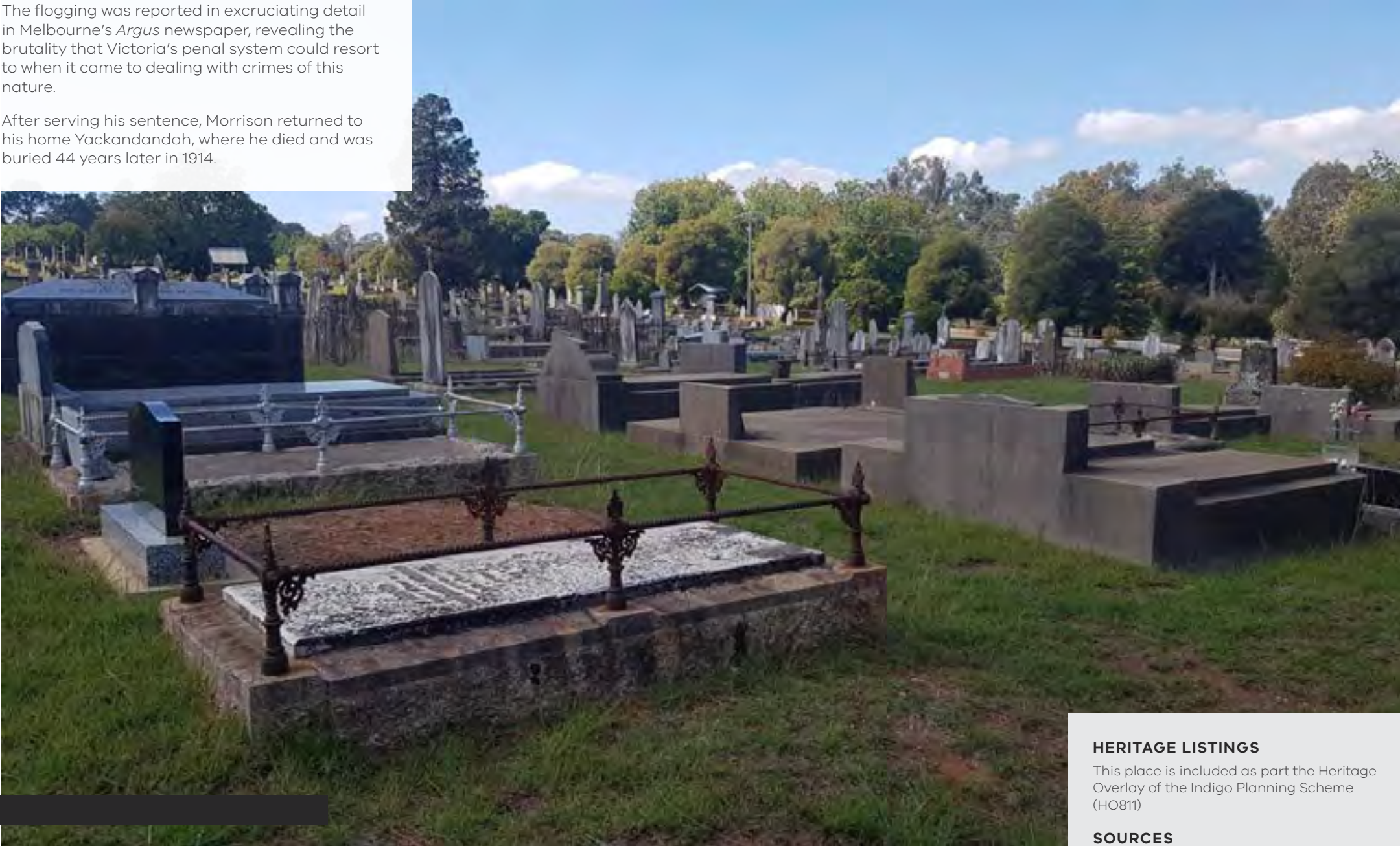
Morrison was arrested at his home in Yackandandah in July 1870. It was alleged that he:

... feloniously, wickedly and against the order of nature did carnally know one George Groves and with him did feloniously consent and perpetrate the abominable crime of buggery contrary to the statute.⁵²

George Groves was charged along the same lines, except that he was considered 'an accessory' to the crime. But by the time the case was heard in the Supreme Court, sitting in nearby Beechworth, Groves had been convinced, reluctantly, to testify against Morrison. The Chief Justice proceeded to unleash the fury of the law on Morrison. He was sentenced to 10 years' hard labour and three floggings of 50 lashes with a cat-o'-nine-tails. He served his time in Pentridge gaol.

The flogging was reported in excruciating detail in Melbourne's *Argus* newspaper, revealing the brutality that Victoria's penal system could resort to when it came to dealing with crimes of this nature.

After serving his sentence, Morrison returned to his home Yackandandah, where he died and was buried 44 years later in 1914.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

This place is included as part the Heritage Overlay of the Indigo Planning Scheme (HO811)

SOURCES

Graham Willett, 'The Flogging of John Morrison and the Fury of Victorian Law', *Australia & New Zealand Law & History E-Journal*, 2011.

'The Convict Morrison', *Argus*, 8 November 1870; reprinted *Ovens and Murray Advertiser*, 10 November 1870.

⁵² 'Charge for an Indictable Offence', *The Queen v John Morrison and George Groves*, Criminal Trial Briefs, PROV, VPRS 30/P0000/368/6

Florence Cox File

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE VICTORIA

A file previously held in the collection of the Supreme Court of Victoria and now in Public Record Office Victoria contains records of the annulment of the marriage of Florence Cox in 1919.⁵³ As the earliest known record of a person with intersex variations in Victorian history, Cox's story – and this record – are of unique historical significance to the LGBTIQ+ history of the State.

Florence Cox (1887–1950) had a middle-class upbringing in Melbourne. In 1914 she travelled to Bengal to marry her fiancé Frank Paice and to join him in his missionary work for the Baptist church. The couple returned to Melbourne in 1918 and the following year the Supreme Court of Victoria, at Paice's request, annulled their marriage.

The Supreme Court file reveals that Paice declared he had been unable to consummate the marriage, due to 'a malformation frigidity or other defect of the parts of generation' of his wife. Both Paice and Cox were subject to medical examination, which established that Cox had what is recognised today as the intersex condition complete androgen insensitivity syndrome.

The court determined that marital intercourse, as it was understood at the time, was impossible for Paice and Cox, and granted the request for an annulment. Paice remarried, fathered children and led a successful professional and civic life, serving a period as Mayor of Nunawading, in the middle-class eastern suburbs of Melbourne.

Cox's life was very different. It is unlikely that anyone in her life would have known what had prompted the end of the marriage, but gossip would certainly have focussed on her part in it. She never remarried and, although she remained connected to her family, her story was rarely discussed. Cox was admitted to Mont Park Mental Hospital in Melbourne's northern suburbs in 1945, where she died five years later.

The Supreme Court file preserves one of the most detailed medical descriptions of a person with intersex variations from that period.

It is particularly striking that following the court case, the file was closed 'forever'. This indicates how seriously the court took the case, and its determination to protect Cox and Paice from public scrutiny. It speaks loudly to the thinking of the time on a matter that was rarely, if ever, raised in public.

In 1997, Cox's great-nephew Ian Richardson set out to investigate the secrecy surrounding his great-aunt Florrie. Following a relentless, two-year campaign by Richardson and other descendants of Cox and Paice, the Supreme Court file was finally opened to the public. Richardson's book, *God's Triangle*, recounts his quest and brings Cox's story out of the archives and into the light.

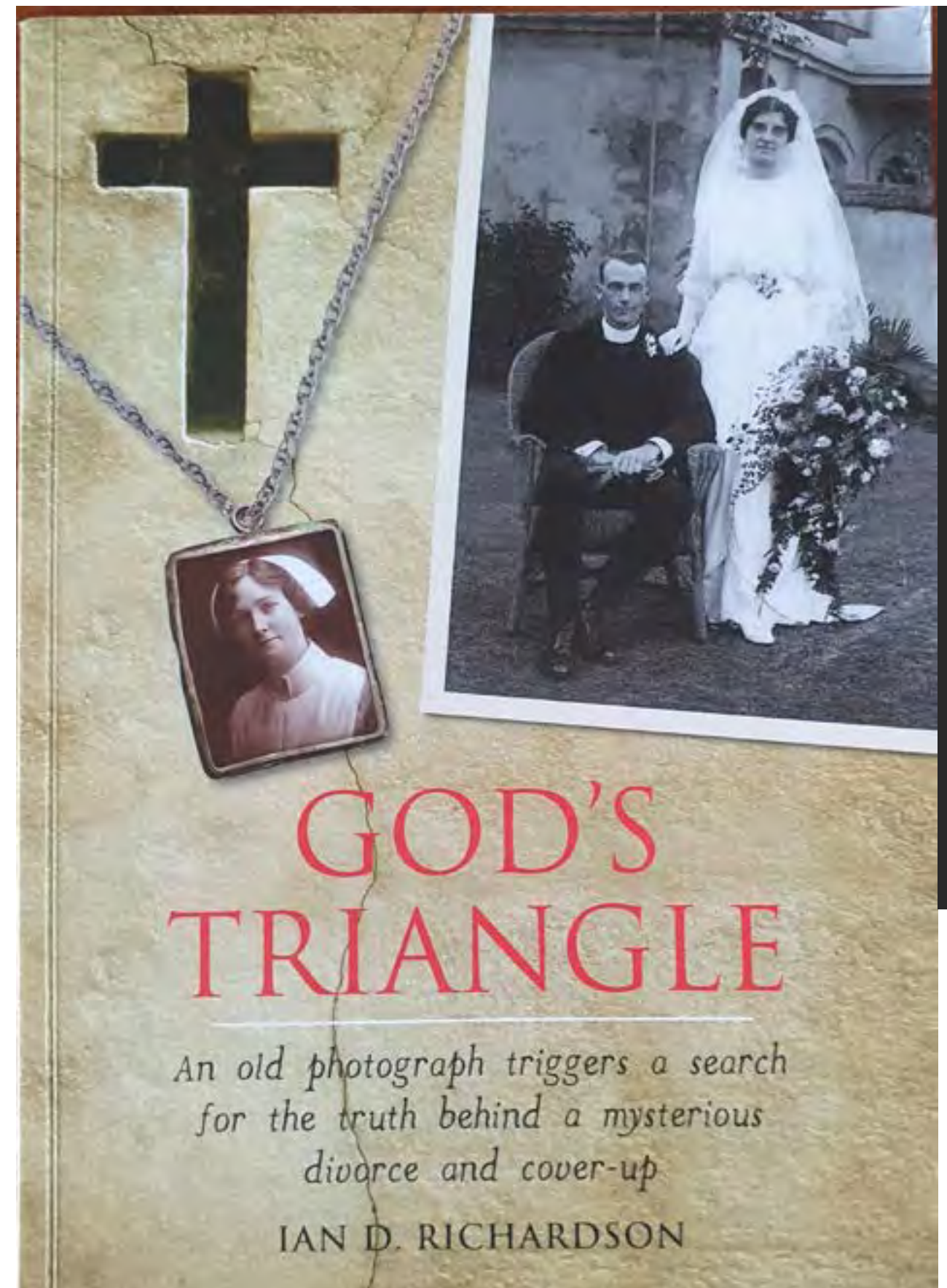
HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Frank Ernest PAICE Party: Petitioner, Florence Martha PAICE (OTHERWISE COSE) Party: Respondent, Case No. 1919/127, VPRS 283/ P2 unit 11, Public Record Office Victoria.

Ian D Richardson, *God's Triangle: in memory of Florrie*, Richardson Media, London, 2011.



Puckapunyal Army Camp

PUCKAPUNYAL, VICTORIA

Puckapunyal Army Camp was established in 1939 as part of Australia's preparation for World War II. It is Victoria's largest military training facility and one of Australia's most significant defence establishments. The camp is important site of queer experiences of the military in the mid-twentieth century.

In 1956, *Truth* newspaper published a screaming front-page headline: 'VICE SHOCK IN ARMY CAMP'. The report revealed that an 'unsavoury cell of homosexuals' had been uncovered at Puckapunyal Army Camp. Acting with 'commendable speed and ruthlessness to strike at this canker', military authorities had, within two days of the first hint of the situation, identified the five men, paraded them at the Albert Park barracks, and discharged them without service privileges.⁵⁴

This incident was just the visible tip of a very large iceberg. In the 1950s Australian military commanders shared their anxiety about the threat of homosexuality with the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) (see 'Persons with Serious Character Defects as Security Risks' ASIO file). If anything, the military was even more concerned about homosexuality than ASIO. It was, after all, in charge of 'a homosexual institution', where men and women were strictly segregated from each other, housed in barracks and given a lot of free time.⁵⁵ In the 1950s and 1960s, there was an intense anti-homosexual policing of the military services directed against homosexual men and women.⁵⁶

Beginning in the 1990s successive federal governments made changes to military policy, allowing gay, lesbian, bisexual and trans service personnel to serve openly.

⁵⁴ 'Vice Shock in Army Camp', *Truth*, 23 June 1964.
⁵⁵ Graham Willett and Yorick Smaal, "A homosexual institution": Same-sex desire in the army during World War II', *Australian Army Journal*, Vol. 10, No. 3, 2013, pp. 23-40.
⁵⁶ Ruth Ford, 'Disciplined, Punished and Resisting Bodies: Lesbian Women and the Australian Armed Services, 1950s-1960s', *Lilith: A Feminist Historical Journal*, Autumn 1996, pp. 53-77; Garry Wotherspoon, 'Comrades-in-Arms', in Joy Damousi and Marilyn Lake (eds), *Gender and War: Australians at War in the Twentieth Century*, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, 1995, pp. 205-22.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

This place is on Commonwealth Land and not subject to Victorian planning legislation.

SOURCES

Graham Willett and Yorick Smaal, "A homosexual institution": Same-sex desire in the army during World War II', *Australian Army Journal*, Vol. 10, No. 3, 2013, pp. 23-40.
Graham Willett, *Living Out Loud: a history of gay and lesbian activism in Australia*, Allen & Unwin, St Leonards, 2000, p. 13.
'Puckapunyal Army Camp', Victorian Heritage Database, <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/127240>, accessed 14 September 2020.
Ruth Ford, 'Disciplined, Punished and Resisting Bodies: Lesbian Women and the Australian Armed Services, 1950s-1960s', *Lilith: A Feminist Historical Journal*, Autumn 1996, pp. 53-77.
'Vice Shock in Army Camp', *Truth*, 23 June 1964

Phalloplethysmographic Result Graphs

PRIVATE COLLECTION

These long sheets of paper are charts recording the first ever results and the only surviving original records in Australia of a diagnostic tool, known as the phalloplethysmographic test, for measuring erotic response in men with a view to diagnosing their sexual orientation. They have historical and social significance as a unique record of the place of psychiatry in Victorian LGBTIQ+ history.

The graphs were created by Dr Neil McConaghy, who was working at the Prince Alfred Hospital in Melbourne. He was the only Australian psychiatrist to ever put this diagnostic tool into full clinical application. At the time, in the early 1960s, McConaghy was about to embark on the world's second biggest longitudinal experiment using aversion therapy to treat homosexual desire. These scrolled graphs were the first recordings McConaghy made while experimenting with the method.

The tool worked by recording changes in the air pressure of an airtight cylinder that was placed over the subject's penis and connected with a long plastic tube to a polygraph machine. The man would be asked to look at pictures including typical 'erotic' images of both men and women, as well as deliberately non-erotic images. The concept was that if the man was sexually aroused by any of the images, blood would flow to his penis and change the air pressure in the cylinder. The pressure would then be pushed down the tube, causing the polygraph needle to fluctuate and produce lines on the paper.

McConaghy attempted to treat lesbians, but the numbers of women coming to him for treatment were too few to be of clinical use. He also worked with trans people who wanted help with what was then classified as 'gender dysphoria'.⁵⁷

⁵⁷ 'Gender incongruence' is now the preferred sexual health classification of transgender and gender diverse people by the World Health Organization (WHO), but 'gender dysphoria' remains in common use in Australia.

In the early 1970s, McConaghy was the target of gay liberationist protests in Australia and in the United States for his advocacy and use of aversion therapies for homosexuality. These phalloplethysmographic result graphs are a powerful record of the attitudes and practices of one part of the medical profession in the past in relation to diverse genders and sexualities.

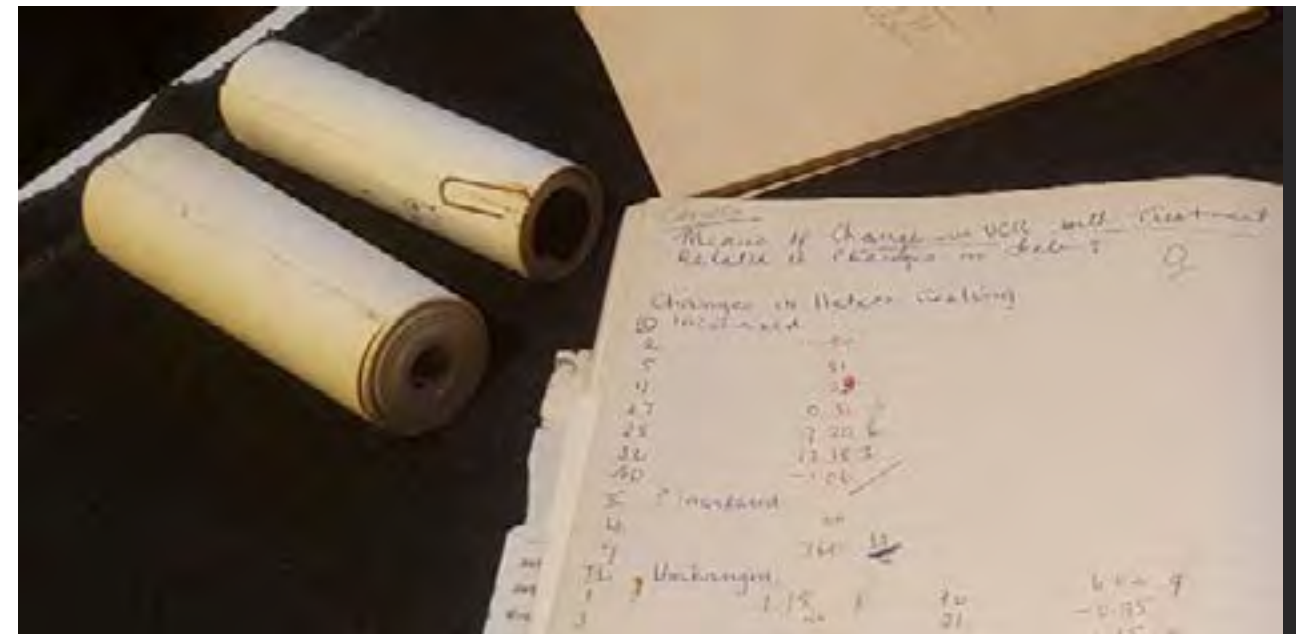
HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Kate Davison, 'Neil McConaghy's Penile Plethysmograph', in Chris Brickell and Judith Collard (eds), *Queer Objects*, Rutgers & Manchester University Presses, Otago, 2019, pp. 286-295.

Nathan Ha, 'Detecting and Teaching Desire: Phallometry, Freund, and Behaviorist Sexology', *Osiris*, Vol. 30, 2015, pp. 205-227.



‘Persons with Serious Character Defects as Security Risks’ ASIO file

NATIONAL ARCHIVES OF AUSTRALIA

In the 1950s and 1960s, from its headquarters in Queens Road, Melbourne, the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) closely monitored homosexual women and men and reported its fears and findings about them to the Federal Cabinet. The file thus has historical significance as a record of state surveillance of LGBTIQ+ Victorians.

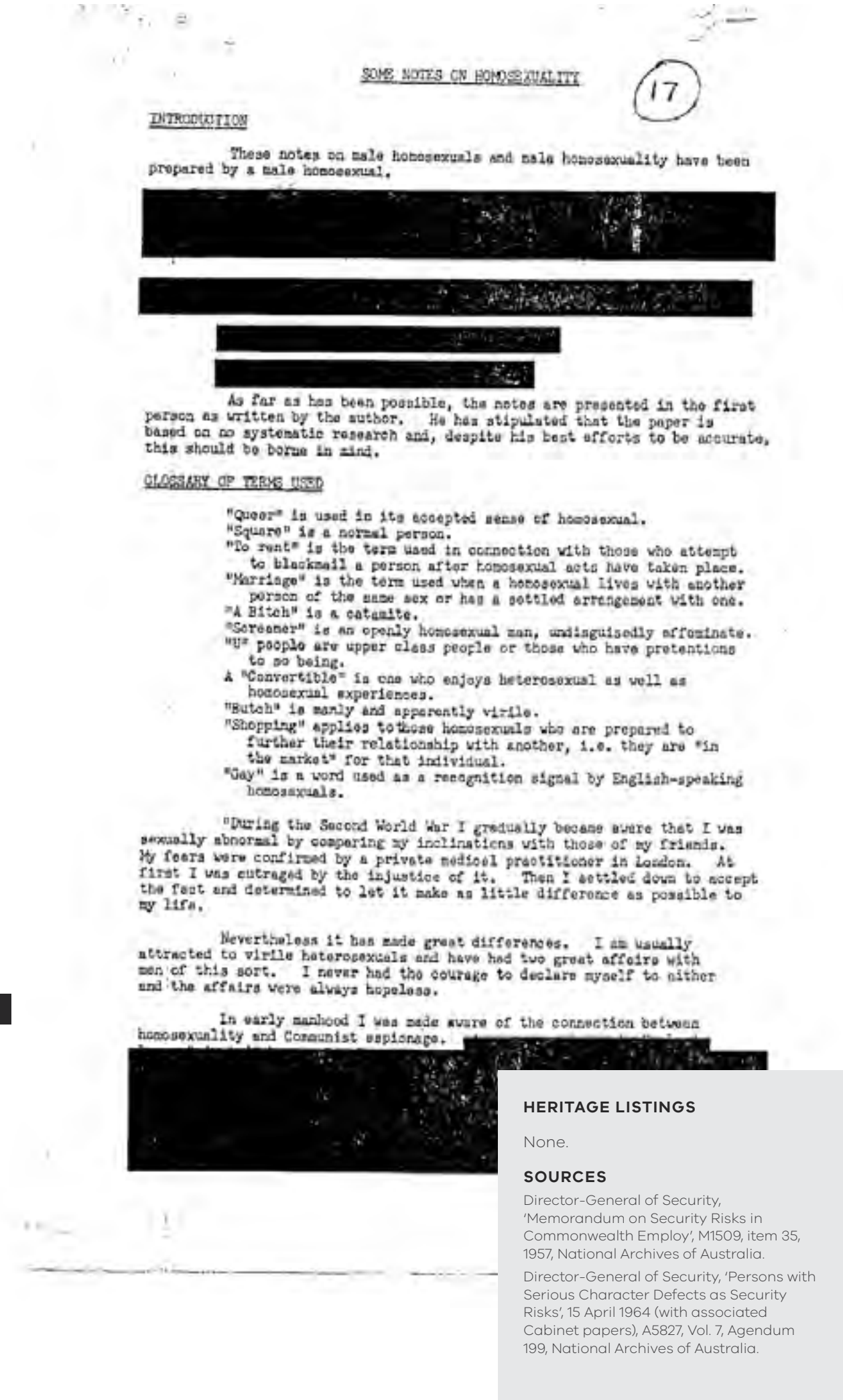
At the height of the Cold War, federal Australian authorities considered homosexuality to be a threat to national security. This file, compiled by ASIO over several years in the late 1950s and early 1960s and labelled ‘Persons with Serious Character Defects as Security Risks’, attests to this sense of threat. ASIO was greatly concerned about the danger that public servants might be blackmailed by foreign powers (almost always the USSR) to reveal state secrets. This fear was not unreasonable – to be revealed as a homosexual could have dire social or legal consequences for the individual concerned, as well as his or her friends and loved ones.

But there was more to it than this. ASIO was convinced that even without the threat of potential blackmail, homosexuality was, in and of itself, an expression of severe ‘character defect’. For ASIO, no homosexual, by virtue of his or her sexuality, could be trusted under any circumstances. The characteristics which ASIO observed in homosexuals included ‘instability, willing self-deceit, defiance towards society’ – characteristics that were considered to lend themselves to treacherous behaviour.⁵⁸ These observations reinforced the organisation’s view

that such people were devoid of moral judgement, making them unfit to serve their country. The policy documents explicitly included female homosexuals in this assessment.

The file provides a remarkable insight into official thinking on the subject of homosexuality and into the threats that homosexuals faced in their everyday lives in the mid-twentieth century.

58 Director-General of Security, ‘Persons with Serious Character Defects as Security Risks’, 15 April 1964 (with associated Cabinet papers), A5827, Vol. 7, Agendum 199, National Archives of Australia.



The Boys in the Band, 1969

AUSTRALIAN PERFORMING ARTS COLLECTION

The Boys in the Band, a play written by Mart Crowley and first performed in New York in 1968, came to Melbourne in 1969. It was one of the first plays to deal openly with homosexual themes and its performance in Melbourne was a landmark in the history of censorship in Victoria. It was a box-office success and provided the biggest commercial triumph of director John Tasker's career. It's 1969 production in Melbourne is significant as a marker of changing community standards towards, and censorship of, queer life.

The play examines the lives of a group of homosexual friends gathering to celebrate a birthday. Over the course of the evening, the diverse woes of their lives are revealed. Melbourne historian John Rickard, who saw *The Boys in the Band* in 1969, considered it both 'depressing' and 'assertively gay and deliberately outrageous'. But he observed, too, that the play's dark portrayal of the homosexual world helped make it 'acceptable' to wide audiences.⁵⁹

Many of the reviews written at the time expressed a condescending and pitying attitude to the homosexual characters. But for many homosexual men, seeing themselves portrayed openly on stage was a breakthrough moment.

Despite the show's success, Victoria Police prosecuted the actors involved; not for the homosexual themes in the play (there was no law against depicting homosexuality that could have been easily used), but for the use of obscene language – specifically the words 'fuck' and 'cunt'. The magistrate went to see the play for himself but declined to convict the actors. On appeal, a higher court did convict but the production was able to continue its Melbourne run.

HERITAGE LISTINGS

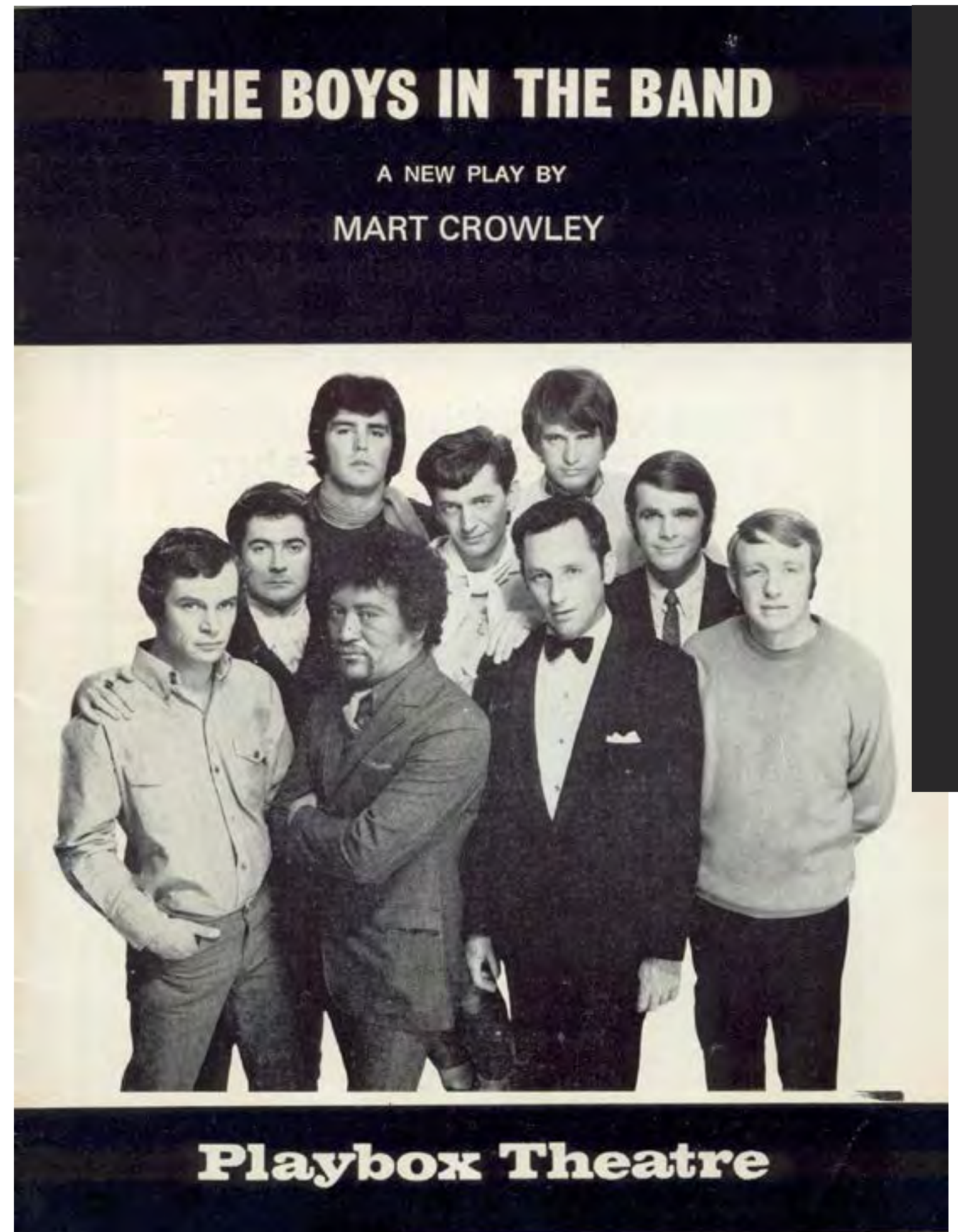
None.

SOURCES

Documents relating to the prosecution of actors in the production, Australian Performing Arts Museum, 1991.126.191-3, 187

Geoffrey Hutton, 'High Voltage Jab in the Arm', *The Age*, 4 June 1969, p. 2.

John Rickard, 'A Big Hand for "The Boys in the Band"', in Mark Baker (ed.), *History on the Edge: Essays in Honour of John Foster (1944–1994)*, University of Melbourne History Department, Melbourne, 1997, pp. 293–302.



⁵⁹ John Rickard, 'A Big Hand for "The Boys in the Band"', in Mark Baker (ed.), *History on the Edge: Essays in Honour of John Foster (1944–1994)*, University of Melbourne History Department, Melbourne, 1997, pp. 293–302.

Black Rock Beach

BEACH ROAD, BLACK ROCK

Black Rock Beach has historical significance for LGBTIQ+ communities as a reminder of the struggle for homosexual decriminalisation. In November and December 1976, the phone services operated by Melbourne Gay Liberation and Society Five (which had begun life as the Melbourne branch of the Campaign Against Moral Persecution in 1970) noticed a marked increase in calls from men who had been arrested at the Black Rock Beach beat. Activists convened a meeting and decided to lodge a formal complaint with the Commissioner of Police, produce a leaflet directed at beat users, and to approach the media. They organised a demonstration on the beach to raise awareness of the issue.

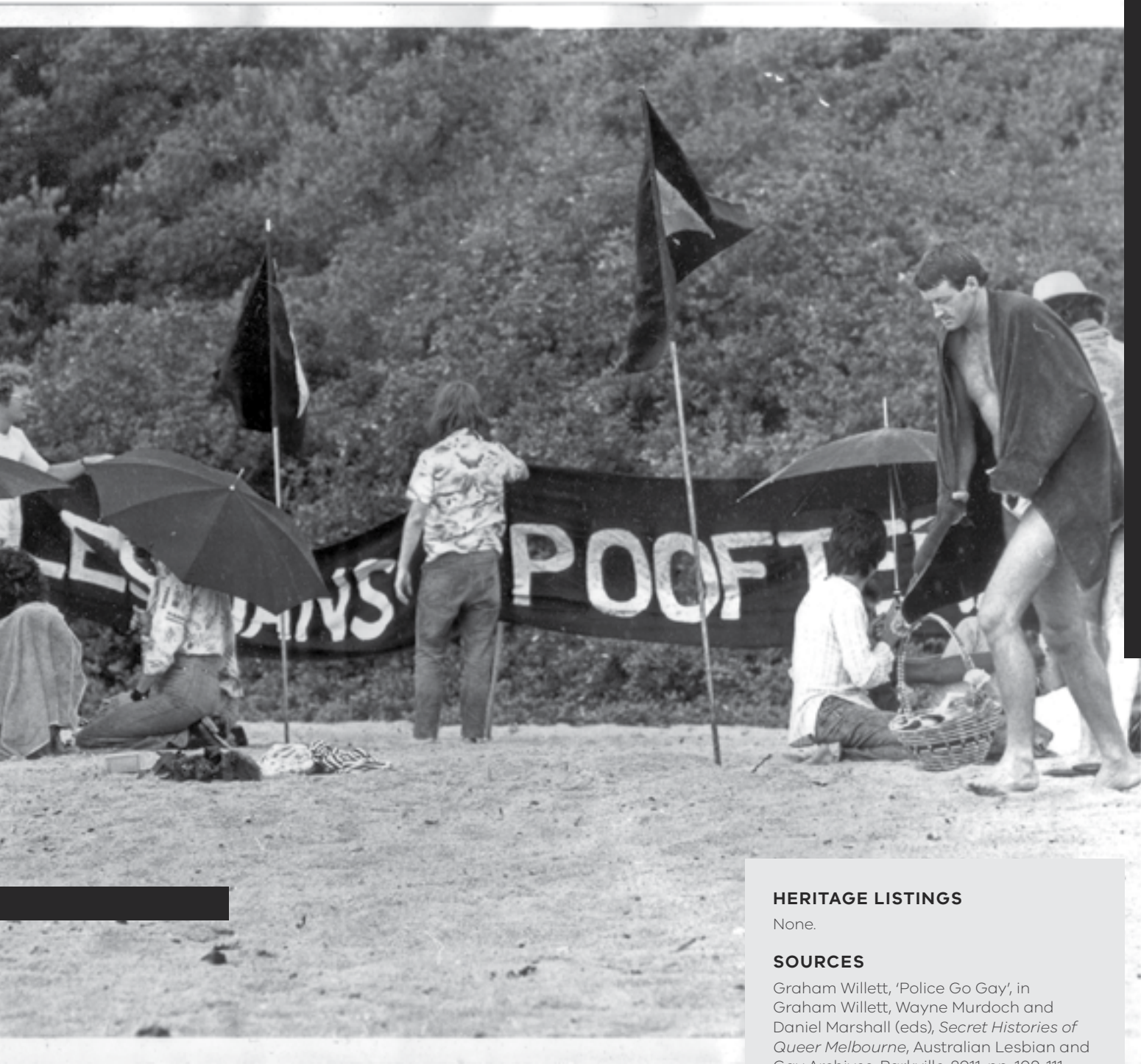
A month later, the mainstream press were onto the issue. Under the headline 'Police Go Gay to Lure Homosexuals', *The Age* reported that police officers had been lurking near the beat to observe gay men and learn to imitate the mannerisms, especially the 'particular walk', by which gay men identified each other.⁶⁰ Some of the more attractive officers were then despatched in plain clothes to put this knowledge to work. Within a few days, 68 men had been arrested for soliciting with homosexual intent. The newspaper alleged that police had used threats of imprisonment to extract confessions from the men.

Newspaper reports brought this issue to wide public attention. Although there was a sudden rush of denials from the police that they had entrapped the men or put them under undue pressure to confess, a public debate began. Far from public outrage being directed against the 'perverts' in the bushes, it was the police who were the focus of criticism. Politicians, community groups and gay organisations expressed outrage. Lawyers offered support. Letters of protest on the men's behalf were written and published in newspapers.

Amidst the storm of protest and debate, it became clear that there was widespread support for the decriminalisation of homosexuality. As early as 14 January 1977, the Victorian leader of the Australian Labor Party, Clyde Holding, endorsed the reform. A week later, members of the Young

Liberal Movement of Australia wrote to members of parliament urging them to support reform of the laws relating to homosexuality. Victoria's Liberal premier Dick Hamer referred the matter to his Equal Opportunity Advisory Committee. In due course, it provided a detailed proposal for a remarkably liberal reform of the laws.

The heavy-handed police action at Black Rock Beach in 1976 played a crucial role in sparking the eventual decriminalisation of homosexuality in Victoria in 1981.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Graham Willett, 'Police Go Gay', in Graham Willett, Wayne Murdoch and Daniel Marshall (eds), *Secret Histories of Queer Melbourne*, Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives, Parkville, 2011, pp. 109-111.

'Police Blitz Catches Homosexuals', *Truth*, 18 December 1976.

'Police Go Gay to Lure Homosexuals', *The Age*, 12 January 1977.

The telephone advice service logbooks of Society Five and Gay Liberation are in the Australian Queer Archives.

⁶⁰ Graham Willett, 'Police Go Gay', in Graham Willett, Wayne Murdoch and Daniel Marshall (eds), *Secret Histories of Queer Melbourne*, Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives, Parkville, 2011, pp. 109-111.

Johnstone Park

GHERINGHAP STREET, GEELONG

Originally reserved in 1848, this site in central Geelong was developed into a public park in the late 1860s and officially opened in 1872. Johnstone Park's use as an outdoor gathering place and entertainment area has created historical meaning for queer communities as a reminder of homophobic violence.

At 4am on 25 November 1988, a passer-by found the body of Brent Everett in the public toilet at Johnstone Park. Even the police were shocked by the brutality that had been inflicted on Everett. He had been punched, kicked and stomped to death.

Everett's murderer, Daryl Pritchard, was soon found and brought to trial. He claimed that Everett had made a sexual advance towards him, which had provoked him to violence, and that he could only remember throwing the first two punches. The jury was not convinced and nor was the judge, who expressed the view that Pritchard had gone to the park with the express purpose of seeking out a homosexual. Everett, a skilled artist remembered by his sister as a quiet and gentle person, just happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. Pritchard was sentenced to 16 years in prison, with a non-parole period of 12 years.

Importantly, the incident might have been avoided. Pritchard had a history of violence but had previously escaped conviction. The judge of the court case noted that the beat at Johnstone Park was as well-known to the police as it was to gays and 'poofteer-bashers'. He recommended that the toilet block be demolished.

Brent Everett is well remembered in Geelong and, fittingly, Johnstone Park has been the home of the city's Rainbow Festival since 2018. The park is now associated with an event dedicated to having fun, overcoming prejudice and creating safe spaces.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR H1114)

SOURCES

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'Johnstone Park', Victorian Heritage Database, <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/1992>, accessed 14 September 2020.

Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens

9 NICHOLSON STREET, CARLTON

Constructed in the late 1870s to house the International Exhibition of 1880, Melbourne's Royal Exhibition Building, and the gardens that surround it, comprise one of Australia's most significant heritage sites. The building has played a prominent part in Victorian life and is recognised on the UNESCO World Heritage List for its historical, architectural, aesthetic, and social significance. It is also important as the site of historically notable events at various points in LGBTIQ+ history.

In 2001, the Royal Exhibition Building was used for the official unfolding of the AIDS Memorial Quilt, being one of the few buildings in Melbourne with enough floor space for such an occasion (see **Australian AIDS Memorial Quilt Project**). However, one of the building's more dramatic connections with queer history occurred in 1888, when it was used for the first Great Exhibition staged to celebrate the centenary of British arrival in New South Wales.

One afternoon during the exhibition, a young woman promenading along the Grand Avenue of Nations – one of the thoroughfares in the gardens – caught the eye of a policeman. An encounter turned into an exchange, and then a struggle in which the woman's wig came off, revealing her to be a man.

Nineteen-year-old Gordon Lawrence appeared in court still dressed in his female attire – a 'get up so excellent it would deceive anybody', according

to the *Herald* newspaper.⁶¹ Cross-dressing was one thing (an offence attracting a maximum of six months in prison), but on visiting Lawrence's house in George Street, Fitzroy, the police found make-up, women's clothes, fans and jewellery, a bottle of oil for 'certain purposes', and 'some articles of a more suspicious nature'.

The authorities suspected that Lawrence was engaging in 'masquerade' or 'personation' (in the language of the time) for the purposes of prostitution. But they could not prove it.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of this episode is the public discussion surrounding Lawrence's membership of a 'class' or a 'set' of men 'known to commit a disgusting and horrible offence' – namely, sodomy.⁶² Unlike so many of those caught up in the policing of such behaviour earlier in the nineteenth century, Lawrence seems to have been part of an emerging world of social networks of men defined by their sexual behaviour and, perhaps, their identities. His arrest in the Carlton Gardens in 1888 provides important insight into queer life in Melbourne at that time.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR H1501)

Inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List.

SOURCES

'A Strange Case of Personation', *The Age*, 2 October 1888.

David Dunstan, 'Royal Exhibition Building', Encyclopedia of Melbourne, <https://www.emelbourne.net.au/biogs/EM01274b.htm>, accessed 14 September 2020.

Lucy Chesser, 'Cross Dressing, Sexual (Mis)representation and Homosexual Desire, 1863-1893', in David L Phillips and Graham Willett (eds), *Australia's Homosexual Histories*, Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives, Melbourne, 2000.

'Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens (World Heritage Place)', Victorian Heritage Database, <https://vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/228>, accessed 14 September 2020.

Susanne Davies, 'Sexuality, Performance and Spectatorship in Law: The Case of Gordon Lawrence', *Journal of the History of Sexuality*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 1997, pp. 389-408.

'The Extraordinary Case at the Exhibition', *Herald*, 1 October 1888.

⁶¹ 'A Strange Case of Personation', *The Age*, 2 October 1888; 'The Extraordinary Case at the Exhibition', *Herald*, 1 October 1888.

⁶² Cited in Lucy Chesser, 'Cross Dressing, Sexual (Mis)representation and Homosexual Desire, 1863-1893', in David L Phillips and Graham Willett (eds), *Australia's Homosexual Histories*, Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives, Melbourne, 2000.

[illegible]

‘Lesbians are Lovely’ Photograph

AUSTRALIAN QUEER ARCHIVES

This photograph was taken by Ponch Hawkes in 1973 to be featured alongside Helen Garner’s article ‘It’s Gay Pride Week’, published in Melbourne magazine *The Digger*.⁶³ The photograph depicts four women holding hands in front of a wall with the words ‘Lesbians are lovely’ written on it. The graffiti had recently been painted on the side of a house near Rae Street, Fitzroy and the women in the photograph are (from left to right): Jane McConachie, Sue Jackson, Jenny Pausacker and Chris Sitka. All were in their late teens and early twenties.

Women’s liberation and gay liberation were a big influence on university students in Melbourne in the 1970s. The network and community of shared households in the inner north of Melbourne at that time, particularly households of lesbians and women, were hubs of passionate political activism.

The women in this photograph lived in share houses in Fitzroy, North Fitzroy and Carlton, and were active participants in the women’s liberation and gay liberation movements, as well as other political campaigns of the time. They described themselves as radical lesbian activists who were influential in the push for lesbian visibility. Sue Jackson remembers late-night ideological discussions around identity, monogamy, and oppression, and many meetings, protests and vigils during this seminal time in the 1970s.

Chris Sitka remembers signing up to join the Women’s Liberation and Gay Liberation groups at the University of Melbourne on the same day:

It was Orientation Day at the University of Melbourne and they had a Women’s Liberation table next to a Gay Liberation table and to my knowledge I’d never met any other lesbians.

I went to both tables and I signed up and that’s where I met my first lesbians. I went to a Gay Liberation meeting that night and became part of the [recently formed] Gay Women’s Group.⁶⁴

Although the slogan ‘Lesbians are lovely’ now seems whimsical, in the 1970s the word ‘lesbian’ was almost obscene and for it to be graffitied on a private home was seen as scandalous. Just prior to this photograph being taken, a similar slogan had been graffitied nearby on the wall surrounding the convent on the corner of Alexandra Parade and Nicholson Street, which received attention from the press at the time.



⁶³ Helen Garner, ‘It’s Gay Pride Week’, *The Digger*, No. 22, September 1973, p. 7.

⁶⁴ Interview with Chris Sitka, Jenny Pausacker, Sue Jackson and Ponch Hawkes, conducted by Angela Bailey, 8 November 2019, Australian Queer Archives.

HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Helen Garner, ‘It’s Gay Pride Week’, *The Digger*, No. 22, September 1973, p. 7.

Interview with Chris Sitka, Jenny Pausacker, Sue Jackson and Ponch Hawkes, conducted by Angela Bailey, 8 November 2019, Australian Queer Archives.

Royal Botanic Gardens

BIRDWOOD AVENUE, MELBOURNE

Melbourne's Royal Botanic Gardens was first established in 1846 on land reserved on the south side of the Yarra River. It was gradually expanded and developed over time to cover 38 hectares. The Royal Botanic Gardens has many important stories to tell about Victoria's history, including its queer history.

September 1973 saw the first ever gay rights events in Australia, with Gay Pride Week held in a number of cities across the country. Melbourne's Gay Pride Week included graffiti paint ups (the faintest traces of which can still be seen on a Fitzroy wall), a dance, a talk for high school students, and an evening for parents of gay men and women. The week culminated in a picnic held at the Royal Botanic Gardens that attracted 150 people. The picnic was intended to 'blow a few straight minds', but in a big, bold, and splashy way, without any aggression. The 'infectious charm' of the picnickers, their gay songs, hand-in-hand promenading, and games of drop the hanky and spin the bottle amused passers-by.⁶⁵

This fun and joyful atmosphere was punctured by the appearance of a policeman who announced that games were not permitted in the gardens. Faced with the obvious response that children were playing games all over the place, the police officer declared that he would decide what was a game and what was not. Some people continued to argue with him and threats of arrest were uttered, but the crowd duly settled down to polish off their picnic lunch.

For the early gay liberationists of the mid-twentieth century, visibility and pride went together. The joy of gayness and the sheer exhilaration of being out in public with all your sisters and brothers was a strong feature of early events like Gay Pride Week.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR H1459)

SOURCES

Graham Willett, 'Into the Streets: Gay Lib in Melbourne', in Graham Willett, Wayne Murdoch and Daniel Marshall (eds), *Secret Histories of Queer Melbourne*, Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives, Parkville, 2011, pp. 116

Rennie Ellis, 'A Gay Picnic in the Park', *Nation Review*, Vol. 3, No. 48, 14-20 September 1973, pp. 15-16.

⁶⁵ Rennie Ellis, 'A Gay Picnic in the Park', *Nation Review*, Vol. 3, No. 48, 14-20 September 1973, pp. 15-16.

‘We’re Not All Straight in the Garden State’ Badge

MUSEUMS VICTORIA

The emergence of the gay rights movement in Victoria in the late 1960s and early 1970s involved two new elements: self-organisation and coming out. This badge, designed by Adam Carr of Correct Line Graphics around 1980, is historically and socially significant as an emblem of the scores of badges that the movement either produced in Australia or imported from overseas over several decades.

The term ‘coming out’ originated in the United States and at that time involved acknowledging one’s homosexuality – first to one’s self, then to family, friends and co-workers, and then indiscriminately. The increasing visibility of homosexuality played an important part in shifting public opinion by revealing the sheer numbers of queers, their diversity and their spread across all sections of society. Being visible involved things like organising demonstrations and protests, holding hands in public, and wearing badges.

Badges were not confined to the gay movement. They have a long history of being used to express commitment to a cause or to a particular set of beliefs or politics.

For gay people in the mid to late twentieth century, however, badges had an additional function – they signalled one’s sexuality. While straight people could wear gay rights badges in solidarity, they mostly didn’t. This meant that badges could be important markers of sexuality.

From the earliest days of the gay liberation movement in Australia, many different badges were produced, sold and worn to promote the cause. ‘We’re Not All Straight in the Garden State’ is a special example of one of these badges. The slogan refers to the official motto used to promote Victoria as ‘The Garden State’. This motto appeared on car registration plates from 1977 to 1994, drawing attention to what was considered one of the State’s most notable features. This badge plays on this common phrase, using humour to make a serious point about sexuality.

Importantly, the badge’s message can only be understood if the word ‘straight’ is recognised as slang for ‘heterosexual’. The badge is therefore not only representative of gay activism in Victoria in the 1980s, it is also a key piece of evidence showing changes in language relating to sexuality at that time.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Ashitha Nagesh, ‘What These Badges Reveal About the Struggle For LGBTQ+ Rights in the ‘80s’, BBC, 4 July 2018, <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bbcthree/article/daf7664bf6a1-4760-8509-f1f38d87277e>, accessed 1 October 2020.

Frank Thring's King of Moomba Regalia

CITY OF MELBOURNE ART AND HERITAGE COLLECTION

Frank Thring's Moomba regalia is a reminder not only a prominent Australian performer, but a man who carefully negotiated and expressed his sexuality to conform with societal expectations in mid to late twentieth-century Melbourne.

Thring (1926–1994)
epitomised a particular
way of being homosexual:
staying true to himself and
yet not being noticed. This
was particularly important
for people in public life
prior to the 1970s.

Thring had a long and successful acting career, beginning as a child actor in Australia, then in Hollywood and on the British stage. He returned to Australia in the 1960s and added television to his repertoire.

As King of Melbourne's Moomba Festival in 1982, Thring appeared in a remarkable set of regalia that is now held by the City of Melbourne Art and Heritage Collection. The elaborate robe, sceptre and crown were specially made for him by Mark Wager of the Melbourne Theatre Company. Thring insisted on riding atop an extravagant float in the Moomba Parade, rather than in the usual convertible.

Thring's public persona has been described as 'flamboyant, eccentric, intimidating, often cruelly sarcastic'.⁶⁶ Despite his marriage in the 1950s, Thring was as openly homosexual as it was possible to be in those conservative times, cloaking his sexuality under a protective outrageousness. He mixed in a world of kamps, theatricals and bohemians that was open to all, and he was known to perform on the odd Sunday night at **Val's Coffee Lounge** (see citation).

On Thring's death in 1994, the Australian press made only oblique references to his sexuality.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Craig Bellamy, Gordon Chisholm and Hilary Ericksen, *Moomba: A Festival for the People*, City of Melbourne, 2006, <https://web.archive.org/web/20091028203816/http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/rsrc/PDFs/Moomba/History%20of%20Moomba.pdf>, accessed 15 September 2020.

'Frank Thring 1926–1994', Live Performance Australia Hall of Fame, <https://liveperformance.com.au/hof-profile/frank-thring-1926-1994>, accessed 15 September 2020.

'Robe, Moomba King, Frank Thring', City of Melbourne City Collection, <http://citycollection.melbourne.vic.gov.au/robe-moomba-king-frank-thring>, accessed 15 September 2020.

Robert Macklin, 'Obituary: Frank Thring', *Canberra Times*, 31 December 1994, p. 4.

⁶⁶ 'Frank Thring 1926–1994', Live Performance Australia Hall of Fame, <https://liveperformance.com.au/hof-profile/frank-thring-1926-1994>, accessed 15 September 2020.

Melbourne Leather Men Colours

AUSTRALIAN QUEER ARCHIVES

The leather scene initially emerged in Australia in the 1960s and '70s, often within motorbike clubs, and these origins continued to shape the development of the leather community over time. Initially perceived as a male scene, leather women began to emerge in Australia in the 1980s and 1990s, in groups such as Sexually Outrageous Women and Wicked Women. Groups of leather people sought to promote themselves and increase their visibility by adopting club colours, or symbols.

The leather pride flag was designed in the United States in 1989 to bring together all people in the leather scene who had been appearing in pride marches for years. It consisted of nine horizontal stripes (in black, blue, and white) and a red heart. In 1990, an Australian version of the leather pride flag was created using elements of the Australian flag. Melbourne Leather Men was the first group to incorporate design elements of the leather pride flag into its club colours, which are an important symbol of visibility and community for leather people in Victoria.

By the mid-1990s, leather people in Melbourne described themselves as not just a fetish or a fashion, but a lifestyle. The Leather Pride Association was launched in 1994 by Melbourne Leather Men to stage a Leather Pride Week. This was open to LGBTIQ+ people and others, with an interest in leather, tattooing, piercing and BDSM practices.

Melbourne Leather Men's club colours were displayed during meetings, and sometimes given to other similar clubs in acknowledgement of the association or connection between them. The club colours were adapted for use in patches, t-shirts, and even Christmas ornaments.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

'Melbourne Leather Men', Leatherpedia, <http://www.leatherpedia.org/melbourne-leather-men>, accessed 15 September 2020.

OutBlack Poster

AUSTRALIAN QUEER ARCHIVES

OutBlack is Australia's longest running Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTSBIQ+ (S=Sistergirls, B=Brotherboys) social support group. Founded in 1995 by Ronnie Johnson, Rhys Kinsey, Michael Murray, James Mullet, Paul Willoway, and Gary Kenny, with Uncle Lloyd Clarke as patron, the group advocates around issues of Indigenous health and wellbeing, sexual health and HIV, isolation and marginalisation. Importantly, it recognises the intersection of Indigenous and LGBTIQ+ identities. Founding member Rhys Kinsey recalls a committee meeting held at Collingwood's Star Hotel (176 Hoddle St) to decide on a name for the group. 'OutBlack' was suggested by Gary Kenny and the group adopted it as a cheeky inversion and reference to BlackOut, which was a Sydney-based Aboriginal and gay group also formed in the 1990s.⁶⁷

In 1997, OutBlack celebrated its first Drag Show event at the Star Hotel and from that night the group began a respectful tradition of inviting Elders to attend all its events for free. In 2008, outgoing convenor Ronald Johnson handed over the role of convening the group to Bryan Andy (Yorta Yorta).

Volunteer based, OutBlack has marched in various Midsumma Pride Marches, held picnics, cabarets and drag shows during Midsumma Festival, NAIDOC Week and Reconciliation Week, hosted a radio program, and participated in the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras. OutBlack also participated in the cultural programming for the Outgames held in Melbourne in 2008.

Money raised from events has often been used to hold camps for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTIQ+ people to enjoy a safe place to socialise and explore culture. The most recent camp was held near Heywood on Gunditjmara country in 2013. The OutBlack poster, produced in early 2000, was displayed in many different venues over the years. The poster recognises the various themes and visions of the group, and promotes black and queer visibility while respectfully acknowledging and celebrating the contribution of members who have passed away.



⁶⁷ 'OutBlack – Victoria's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander GLBTIQ and Sistergirls Mob', JOY 94.9 radio interview with Rhys Kinsey, Bryan Andy and Crystal McKinnon, 28 May 2013.

HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

'OutBlack – Victoria's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander GLBTIQ and Sistergirls Mob', JOY 94.9 radio interview with Rhys Kinsey, Bryan Andy and Crystal McKinnon, 28 May 2013.

Toyota Advertisements

AUSTRALIAN QUEER ARCHIVES

In 1992 Toyota became the first major company in Australia to design advertisements specifically to appeal to LGBTIQ+ consumers. *Outrage*, one of Australia's leading gay magazines, published a pair of Toyota advertisements. The first – for the 'family car' – showed a well-dressed gay male couple posing outside their inner suburban home, complete with a picnic basket, a pair of Dalmatians and a blue car. The second advertisement depicted two younger men dressed more casually, posing with a red, sporty car. The advertising copy invited readers to 'Guess which one is yours'.⁶⁸

From the late 1970s, the increasing visibility and confidence of lesbians and gay men had been starting to reshape social attitudes towards sexuality. Hostile behaviour towards people due to their sexuality was less and less socially acceptable, and some began to recognise an opportunity for businesses to use this changing social and political landscape in their marketing. In 1977, the *Australian Financial Review* reported on the purchasing power of gay people.⁶⁹ Major businesses – such as banks, and telecommunication and retail companies – began to place advertisements in the gay and lesbian press. However, the companies tended to use their standard advertisements, rather than adjusting or tailoring the content to the intended audience.

These 1992 Toyota advertisements had an enormous impact on LGBTIQ+ people, who were seeing themselves reflected in the marketing for a mainstream company for the first time. The advertisements were remembered fondly for many years. They also had an impact on the world of marketing. Three years later, Telstra launched advertisements depicting gay male joggers admiring a Telstra linesman in the street and lesbian motorbike riders appreciating the scenery.

Other companies soon followed suit – the 'pink dollar' had emerged. Initially based on the mainstream belief that LGBTIQ+ people, especially men, were 'DINKS' (couples with dual incomes and no kids), the concept of the 'pink dollar' was honed over time to focus on gay men as early adopters of new products.

Whatever the reality of these ideas about homosexuality and consumption, the 'pink dollar' certainly became an important force in the LGBTIQ+ world and more widely, bringing greater visibility to LGBTIQ+ people.

⁶⁸ Advertisement, *Outrage*, September 1991.

⁶⁹ Cited in Bill Calder, *Pink Ink: The Golden Era for Gay and Lesbian Magazines*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK, 2016, p. 156.

ONE CAR DEALER UNDERSTANDS



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HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Advertisement, *Outrage*, September 1991.
Bill Calder, *Pink Ink: The Golden Era for Gay and Lesbian Magazines*, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK, 2016.

Forbidden Love – Bold Passion: Lesbian Stories 1900s-1990s Exhibition Catalogue

AUSTRALIAN QUEER ARCHIVES

The catalogue for the 1996 exhibition *Forbidden Love – Bold Passion: lesbian stories 1900s-1990s* represents a significant moment in Australian lesbian history.

The idea for an exhibition celebrating lesbian lives came to the curators at the funeral of Monte Punshon in 1989 (see **Monte Punshon's scrapbooks**). Organised by the Victoria-based History Inverted collective, the exhibition is a remarkable example of the way that knowledge and inspiration transmit across the generations.

The exhibition told the stories of nine very different women from across Australia, whose lives spanned from the early twentieth century to the 1990s. They were, as the exhibition's curators described them: women who passed as men, discharged soldiers, gay activists, women-next-door, theatre performers, students and feminists. One of the women featured was Jan, a grandmother whose parallel stories of coming out as a lesbian and a Koorie woman was one of the first times such stories were publicly told.

The exhibition told the women's stories using panels attached to beautifully produced closet doors. Objects including a pile of ashes, a pair of army boots, a dental dam, and lapel badges were displayed – significant because of their personal meaning to the women and for the memories and shared experiences they evoked. Some of the most iconic photographs depicting lesbian life in Australia were collected as part of the research for the exhibition.

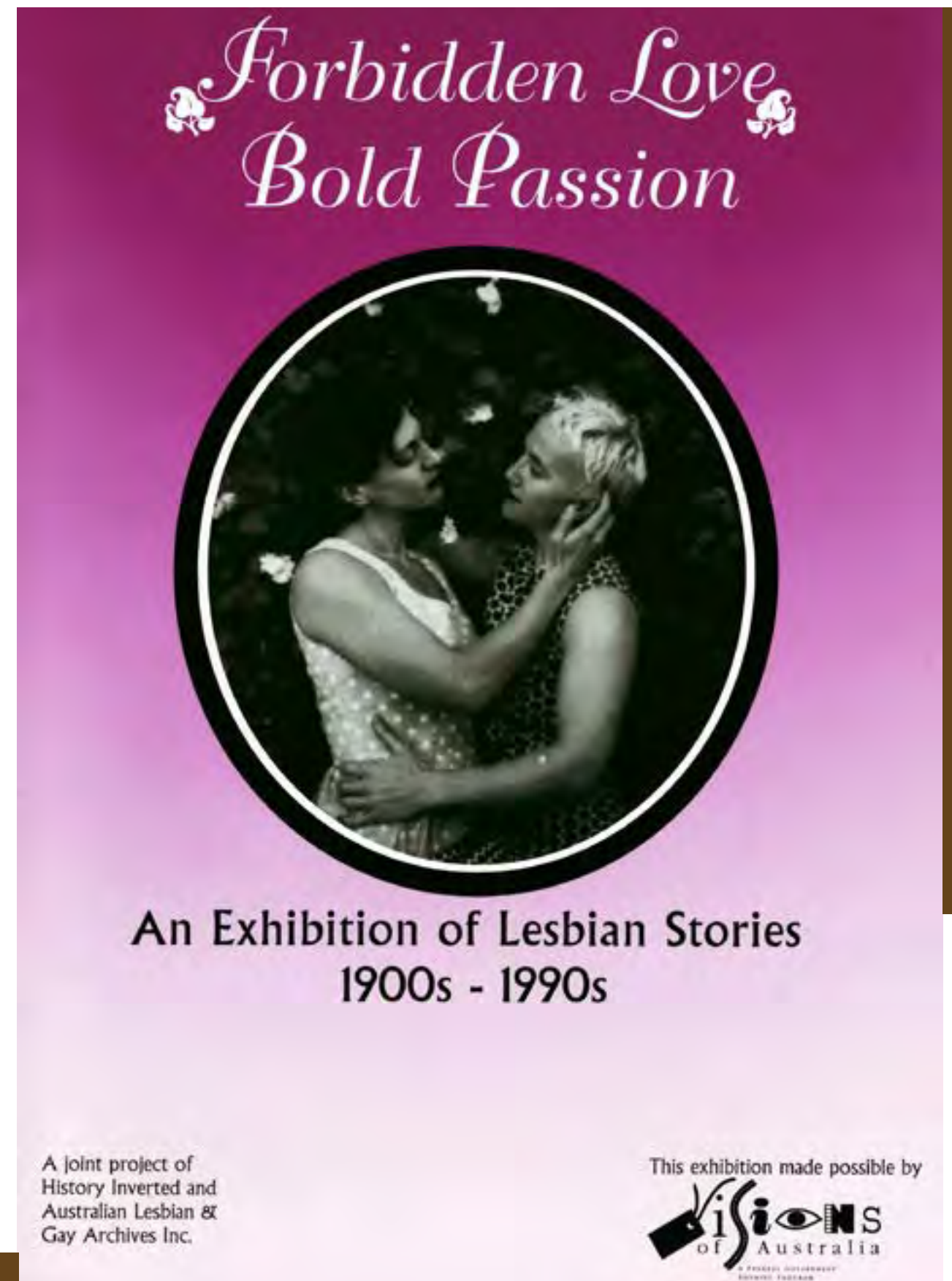
Forbidden Love – Bold Passion was funded by Visions of Australia, which enabled the curators to prepare a highly professional display and, remarkably, to tour the exhibition through several locations around Australia: Melbourne, Castlemaine, Sydney, Penrith, Newcastle, Albury-Wodonga, Adelaide and Hobart. Locals

were encouraged to add their own stories to the exhibition as it arrived in their town or city, bringing more lesbian history to light. No other exhibition about lesbian lives has ever toured so extensively.

Alongside the widespread acceptance of the exhibition, Ruth Ford, one of the curators, reports that it also encountered homophobic responses: some venues rejected it, a trucking company refused to transport it, there was a demonstration against it in Newcastle and the response board which received a number of angry comments.⁷⁰

The exhibition catalogue preserves some of the stories in the women's own words. The objects were returned to their owners, and the closet doors were unfortunately lost. The catalogue and some of the materials collected during the research and touring phases of the exhibition remain in the Australian Queer Archives, preserving this remarkable moment in lesbian history.

⁷⁰ Ruth Ford, "Filthy, Obscene and Mad": Engendering Homophobia 1940s-1960s', in Shirleene Robinson (ed), *Homophobia: An Australian History*, Foundation Press, 2008, pp. 86-112.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Ruth Ford, Lyned Isaac and Rebecca Jones, *Forbidden Love – Bold Passion: Lesbian Stories 1900s to 1990s Exhibition Catalogue*, History Inverted, North Fitzroy, 1996.

Asian Gay Proud Poster

AUSTRALIAN QUEER ARCHIVES

This poster was produced by the AIDS Federation of Australia as part of its Asian Gay Proud campaign, launched in 1998. The campaign (occasionally referred to as Gay Asian Proud) sought to address the specific experiences of queer Asian Australians, a group that had not previously been effectively reached by HIV/AIDS education campaigns. Their experiences included the pressures of cultural attitudes, expectations, and being the target of racism – from within queer communities as well as outside of them.

The Victorian AIDS Council (now Thorne Harbour Health) supported the Gay Asian Proud campaign with workshops and other activities. The workshops were partly social, but were also a way of bringing people together in an inclusive, supportive environment where they could learn from each other's experiences. The gatherings were held weekly and took on key themes such as identity, culture, family, and relationships – looking particularly at how these affected individual lives. The intention was to not only help people of Asian heritage connect with each other and work through issues that were specific to them, but to also ensure that HIV/AIDS education was reaching them, which was essential in influencing behavioural change and preventing the spread of HIV.

This was not the first time that Victorian organisations actively responding to the HIV/AIDS crisis had turned their attention to communities with non-English-speaking backgrounds. Nor would it be the last. In 2004, the Australian LGBTIQ Multicultural Council established itself as an umbrella organisation, taking on a coordinating role for the activities of diverse queer communities in Australia (see **Program of the Inaugural Australian GLBTIQ Multicultural Conference, 2004**).

The importance of the Gay Asian Proud campaign lies in the sustained effort and the variety of strategies adopted to support these particular communities.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Beng Eu, 'Gay Asians are Out', *Melbourne Star Observer*, 1 May 1998.

Adam Carr, 'Culturalising the Problem', *Melbourne Star Observer*, 7 August 1998.

Carlton Courthouse Theatre

349 DRUMMOND STREET, CARLTON

The Carlton Court House is an important feature of the civic core of Drummond Street, and as a reminder of the nineteenth-century expansion of criminal justice institutions. The courthouse has cultural significance as the home of the La Mama Theatre since the mid-1990s. Its importance for LGBTIQ+ Victorians intersects with all elements of the building's history, as illustrated by the life of Noel Tovey.

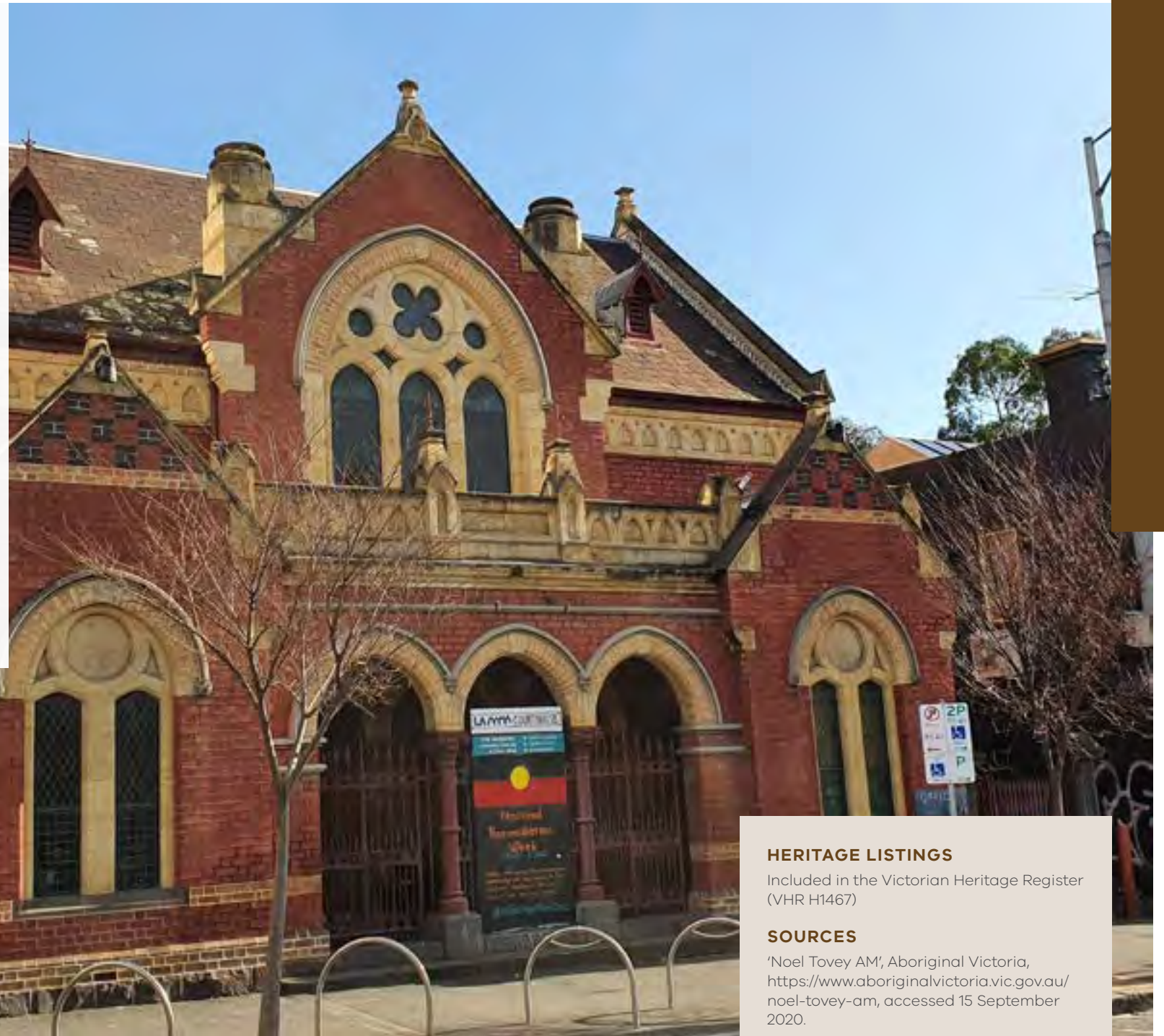
In 2003, performer Noel Tovey AM stood on the stage at Carlton's La Mama Courthouse theatre and presented his autobiographical monologue *Little Black Bastard*. The monologue was published as a memoir in 2004 with the same title, and recounted Tovey's life from his birth in 1934 to his return to Melbourne from overseas in 1990.

Tovey grew up in poverty in inner Melbourne after the Great Depression, and suffered abandonment and abuse, but went on to remarkable achievement. He spent his youth in and out of institutions and on the streets of Melbourne, later working in a bookshop and mingling in bohemian circles. In 1951 he was imprisoned for homosexual offences, which have since been expunged. Tovey moved overseas where he pursued an extraordinary career as Australia's first male ballet dancer of Aboriginal heritage, an actor and a director.

An integral part of Tovey's story, as told in the book and the play *Little Black Bastard*, is his homosexuality.

He vividly describes Melbourne in the 1950s from a gay perspective, including coffee shops and beats, the youth subcultures of 'bodgies' and 'widgies', police and press harassment, female impersonators and drag queens, 'poofs' and homosexuals. The play speaks powerfully of a history that was little known at the time.

There is a certain irony that in performing *Little Black Bastard* at the Carlton Courthouse, Tovey was revisiting the very place where he and his sister had been removed from their father's custody decades before. The building evokes these pivotal moments in Tovey's life and his remarkable triumph over adversity.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

Included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR H1467)

SOURCES

'Noel Tovey AM', Aboriginal Victoria, <https://www.aboriginalvictoria.vic.gov.au/noel-tovey-am>, accessed 15 September 2020.

Noel Tovey, *Little Black Bastard: a story of survival*, Hodder Headline Australia, Sydney, 2004.

Tony Briffa's Mayoral Robes

CITY OF HOBSONS BAY

Tony Briffa was first elected to Hobsons Bay City Council in Melbourne's south-west in 2008 and re-elected two more times, serving terms as deputy mayor (2009–2010, 2010–2011 and 2017–2018) and mayor (2011–2012). She was the first openly intersex person to become an elected official anywhere in the world. As a result, she garnered extraordinary levels of attention, becoming one of the world's most recognisable intersex people.

Briffa was born in 1970 with Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome (AIS). Briffa was raised as a girl and was forced to undergo frequent, invasive and humiliating medical tests and procedures, including various irreversible and non-consensual surgeries and being placed on female hormones at the age of 11. At 16, the hospital arranged for her to attend an AIS Support Group meeting, but even that was conducted under close medical supervision.

While living with the challenges of AIS and dealing with medical interventions, in her twenties Briffa formed relationships with women and men. When she discovered the LGBTIQ+ community, Briffa found a place where she could be completely open about herself with others who understood.

A serious motorbike accident at the age of 27 brought about a change in outlook. Briffa recalls, 'I wanted to make a change in the world. At that point, I was no longer going to hide the fact I was intersex'.⁷⁵ Briffa appeared on television, rejoined the AIS Support Group and became a vocal advocate for intersex people.

Briffa's election to local council, and later to the role of mayor, brought her continued public attention, as well as increased visibility and understanding of intersex people. Briffa's mayoral robes represent her successful political career and, importantly, the fact that this career was achieved by an openly intersex person for the first time.



VISIBILITY

HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Tony Briffa, 'My Experience as the World's First Openly Intersex Mayor', Intersex Day, <https://intersexday.org/en/firstintersex-mayor-tony-briffa>, accessed 16 September 2020.

City of Darebin Rainbow Flag

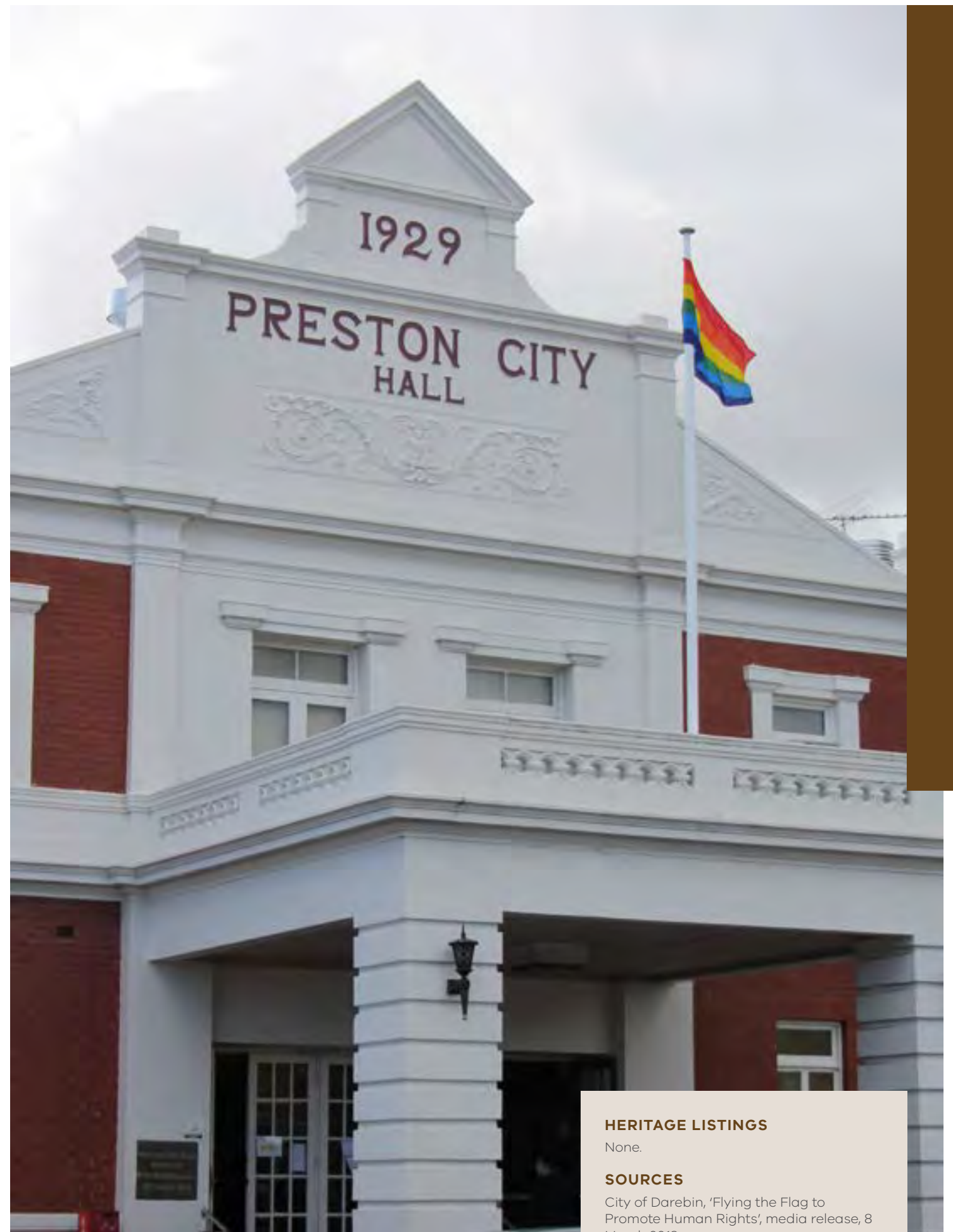
DAREBIN HERITAGE LIBRARY COLLECTION

In 2004, the Australian campaign for same-sex marriage began in earnest when all three major political parties in the federal parliament voted to ban it. By the mid-2010s, the campaign was gaining traction with many different sectors of Australian society. Darebin City Council in the middle-northern suburbs of Melbourne voted to actively support the campaign in 2015.

Two years later, in May 2017, the council voted to raise a rainbow flag over Preston Town Hall as an expression of its support for human rights and for the health and wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ people. The flag was to remain in place until marriage equality was achieved.

The national campaign for marriage equality set out to shape public opinion, as well as to lobby in the corridors of power. Local government was well placed to contribute to this. Motions of support were passed and grant schemes established, but the visibility of the rainbow flag was also important in promoting the campaign and showing support for LGBTIQ+ communities. Flying proudly above the Preston Town Hall, it was a powerful statement, a reminder and an exhortation to the wider community to act.

In early 2018, a couple of months after same-sex marriage was finally legislated in Australia, the flag was lowered and immediately transferred to the collection of Darebin Heritage Library Collection to be preserved 'as a significant heritage object'. It continues to be raised on significant dates in the LGBTIQ+ calendar, such as Midsumma and the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Interphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT).



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

City of Darebin, 'Flying the Flag to Promote Human Rights', media release, 8 March 2018.

City of Darebin, Council Resolution, 26 February 2018, item 6.2: Rainbow Flag.

Ngarigo Queen – Cloak of Queer Visibility

VICTORIAN PRIDE CENTRE

Ngarigo Queen – Cloak of queer visibility is a possum skin cloak created by Melbourne-based artist, activist and community health worker Peter Waples-Crowe. The cloak was originally made for the exhibition *The Lightness of Spirit in the Measure of Happiness*, which was held at the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA) in 2018. Waples-Crowe's cloak is made of possum skin pelts stitched together with waxed linen thread, and features dyed leather in the colours of the rainbow flag and traditional designs burnt onto the inside of the cloak. It is made of over 50 possum skins and measures over three metres long, trailing behind the wearer.

Waples-Crowe describes the cloak as a work of 'determination, culture and queerness'. The artist considered the intersectionality of being Ngarigo and a proud, emerging queer elder, whose collaborative work within the queer and Indigenous communities has further promoted traditional and contemporary queer Indigenous culture. A crucifix/cross symbol on the back of the cloak references 'the erasure of queer histories in Aboriginal culture due to the strict heterosexual gaze of colonisation'.⁷¹ Waples-Crowe has worn the cloak to exhibition opening events and it has become a symbol of strength, unity and visibility for Indigenous and LGBTQ+ communities:

The underside of the cloak is kept close to my body; it is the symbol of the queer community, the rainbow flag. The flag is etched with shield designs from the south-east and speaks of Aboriginal inclusion in the broader rainbow community; it speaks to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTQIA+ mob to stay strong and deadly. Our past might have been erased but our future is here and now and very visible, and we belong in the culture.⁷²

Ngarigo Queen – Cloak of queer visibility is permanently displayed at the Victorian Pride Centre as a powerful symbol of queer Indigenous culture, history and visibility.



HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

Dapper exhibition catalogue, Bundoora Homestead Arts Centre, 2018.

insideOUT exhibition catalogue, Koorie Heritage Trust, 2019.

The Lightness of Being is the Measure of Happiness exhibition publication, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, 2018.

⁷¹ Peter Waples-Crowe, *The Lightness of Being is the Measure of Happiness* exhibition publication, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, 2018.

⁷² Ibid.

2018 Bulldogs' Pride Guernsey

PRIVATE COLLECTION

On 23 February 2018, the Western Bulldogs Football Club hosted Carlton at the VU Whitten Oval, Footscray – a western suburb of Melbourne – in the inaugural AFL Women's (AFLW) Pride Game. The Western Bulldogs players wore a specially designed Bulldogs' Pride Guernsey, which featured rainbow stripes across the red, white and blue of the team's traditional guernsey. Lesbian, queer women and trans participation has been prominent and sometimes controversial in the AFLW, and the Bulldog's Pride Guernsey is important as a reminder of these historic shifts in community understanding and values.

The Pride Game was introduced to celebrate gender and sexual diversity, and inclusiveness in football. It is an event that Western Bulldogs AFLW captain Ellie Blackburn looks forward to each season:

To be able to represent and role model that being inclusive is a great thing to do, and [to see] how happy the environment is at the football – it's a place where people feel comfortable because they're around their people and I love that.⁷³

In February 2020, ahead of the third annual AFLW Pride Game between Carlton and the Western Bulldogs, 400 people marched down the main street of Footscray celebrating the inaugural Footscray Pride March. Members of LGBTIQ+ communities, including drag queens and dykes on bikes, were joined by local councillors, football clubs and organisations such as the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre. The crowd marched to the VU Whitten Oval for the game, with many wearing the 2020 Bulldogs' Pride Guernsey.

Wil Stracke, a founding member of the Bulldog Pride supporter group, moved to the inner-west 25 years ago. She reflects that she could never have imagined such a public expression of pride at that time.⁷⁴ In 2020, inclusivity and local pride in LGBTIQ+ people are clearly visible in the western suburbs. Local councils work together with and for their queer communities, events are held at local venues during Midsumma, and the AFLW Pride Game continues to be held each season, with a special new guernsey designed each year.



VISIBILITY

HERITAGE LISTINGS

None.

SOURCES

'Blackburn Proud to Represent Pride', Western Bulldogs, www.westernbulldogs.com.au/news/565884/blackburnproud-to-represent-pride, accessed 17 September 2020.

'Bulldogs Unveil Pride Game Guernsey', Western Bulldogs, www.westernbulldogs.com.au/news/273071/bulldogs-unveilpride-game-guernsey, accessed 17 September 2020.

'Media Release: 400 Community Members Turn Out for First Footscray Pride March', Bulldog Pride, www.bulldogpride.net/2020/02/23/media-release-400-community-members-turn-out-for-firstfootscray-pride-march, accessed 17 September 2020.

⁷³ 'Blackburn proud to represent Pride', Western Bulldogs, www.westernbulldogs.com.au/news/565884/blackburn-proud-to-represent-pride, accessed 17 September 2020.

⁷⁴ 'Media Release: 400 community members turn out for first Footscray Pride March', Bulldog Pride, www.bulldogpride.net/2020/02/23/media-release-400-community-members-turn-out-for-first-footscray-pride-march, accessed 17 September 2020.

ARCHAEOLOGY

A collage of archaeological images. The top row features a plate with a bird-shaped artifact, a glass, and a teapot. The middle row shows a bottle with a label '25-00757-002', a coin, and a photograph of two workers in a field. The bottom row displays a large, ornate metal object and a teapot. The entire collage is overlaid with a semi-transparent pink banner containing the word 'ARCHAEOLOGY' in white capital letters.

Where is the rainbow porcelain?

This section on the possibilities for queer archaeology results from our desire to be comprehensive and to adopt a diverse approach to heritage. When thinking about queer heritage (places, objects and collections) it is important not to forget archaeology – that is, the fabric you can't see until it's dug up but may be of great significance. Archaeology provides an intimate portrait of the daily lives of people through the things they left behind – discarded, forgotten, or abandoned.

Queer archaeology is a new and emerging field. It's quite rare to see anything written about it. So, within the field, this is something of a cutting edge effort and the Working Party was keen to include it in this Report. Historic archaeology in Australia often unearths the cultural material of ordinary people who did not make the newspapers and can only be traced through rate books and in the archives of the births, death and marriages registries. The role of the archaeologist is to construct a narrative of who these people were and what they valued. The ways in which queerness can be understood in the archaeological record remain a challenge and great opportunity for a more nuanced understanding of the past.

We are grateful to the archaeology team at Heritage Victoria for preparing it and making it available.

Is there archaeological evidence of LGBTIQ+ people and communities in Victoria? Archaeology shines a light on the human past though the excavation and analysis of material remains. When combined with historical research, artefacts – such as porcelain cups and bowls – can yield information about race, age, ethnicity, status, gender, sexuality, cultural practices and religion. These meanings are diverse and variable across ancient and modern societies. Today, rainbow mugs and pride merchandise are readily available. Should this give us an indication of what to expect when we search for queer artefacts from the past? Archaeology cautions us that things

have not always been the way they are now, and we should not impose the lens of the modern day on our reading of the past.

This lesson was brought home to archaeologists in Melbourne during the 1980s, when they excavated a large part of the infamous 'Little Lon' block in the north-east of the city. This was the location of Melbourne's nineteenth-century brothel district. Archaeologists were eager to unearth material culture related to brothels and the sex industry. In fact, something unexpected but perhaps more meaningful was discovered. The project demonstrated that among the dark laneways and brothels, a broader community of families, immigrants and more reputable businesses co-existed and flourished. Little Lon is now understood as a dynamic, diverse and multi-dimensional neighbourhood that contributed to the development of the city's culture in important and unique ways: it wasn't just about the sex industry.

Archaeologists face a similar dilemma in searching for queer archaeology. If they focus too intensely on the 'sexual', the unremarkable daily lives of same-sex attracted people can be overlooked. Both straight and gay people used the kind of Willow pattern tableware, coins and alcohol bottles found at Little Lon. The excavation did not yield material culture which was explicitly associated with same-sex desire: there was no 'ah ha' moment where archaeologists discovered a homoerotic statuette. But what does that mean? All artefacts may have been owned, touched, shared or have meanings attributed to them by people of various and fluid genders and sexualities. Who really owned that fancy mirror? Were some sex workers queer? Perhaps a pattern on crockery had a double meaning? Given that same-sex desire and trans practices were criminal and/or deeply stigmatised, the survival of queer people depended on literally leaving no evidence and their culture being invisible to outsiders.



Bottle and wine from the *William Salthouse* shipwreck, 1841; glass from the *Fiji* shipwreck, 1891. From the Collection held by Heritage Victoria.

Populations like immigrants, soldiers, dentists, women and children are easy to identify and analyse in the archaeological record.

By contrast it is almost impossible to find examples of archaeology exclusively and unequivocally imprinted with markers of same-sex desire in the investigated material culture of Victoria.

Undoubtedly many of the millions of artefacts that have been unearthed in Victoria since the days of the Little Lon dig are pieces of rainbow porcelain – we just can't tell for sure. Moreover, queer heritage is intersectional: it will also speak to other identities such as class, culture, race and religion. As our historical understanding of LGBTIQ+ people increases, we will have a more nuanced interpretative lens for archaeological discoveries: the best results are usually obtained when these disciplines work together. Perhaps the most important consideration is to avoid assumptions and look at all artefacts through the lens of what could be, balanced with what the evidence supports. We should be open minded to the lives, preferences and experiences that all discoveries might reflect.

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