

alga NEWSLETTER

Australian Lesbian & Gay Archives Inc
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Homosexual Histories 3

The Archives organised the third Homosexual Histories conference on in November 2000 at University of Melbourne.

Some twenty papers were presented ranging across biography, political history, lesbian herstories and the many public history projects going on at the moment. The program and many of the papers are to be loaded onto our website at <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~alga>.

A highlight for ALGA was the launch by Dennis Altman of the fifth in the series of **Gay and Lesbian Perspectives**. GLP5 is a selection of papers from the first and second Homosexual Histories conferences, and is published by the Archives in conjunction with the Australian Centre for Lesbian and Gay Research in Sydney. Archives members can buy *GLP5* at the special price of \$20 (order form attached).

On Sunday 26 November, the Archives hosted its **Gay and Lesbian History walk**, another version of which ran during Midsumma.

Thesis Prize 2000

The winner of last year's inaugural prize was Lim Hong San, whose sociology thesis on 'Gendered Aspects of Workplace Culture' was submitted at Murdoch University in Perth. In it, he investigates and documents the experience of various forms of anti-gay discrimination in employment, including both blue-collar and white collar workplaces.

The judges for the prize spoke very highly of Lim Hong San's work, praising its 'skilful weaving of personal narrative and social analysis'. It was, they said, 'clearly and interestingly written, with humorous and thoughtful personal interpolations'.

Hong San, who has since returned home to Singapore, drew attention to the political significance of his thesis, to the importance of 'being out and creating awareness that will benefit everyone in the community'. He is hoping to pursue further research, noting that 'the "gay issue" debate is heating up in Singapore and it is going to be a great issue to handle'.

There were nearly a dozen entries for the Archives thesis prize this year, covering issues as diverse as Jeanette Winterson, anti-homophobic education strategies, Keanu Reeves, lesbian language, visual arts at Mardi Gras, the gay dollar, the male hustler.

The prize of \$250 is for the best fourth year thesis (or equivalent) dealing with gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or queer themes in any discipline. We see this as a means of encouraging research in this newly developing but exciting area of study at the undergraduate level and of making sure that the Archives gets copies of such work.

ALGA would like to thank Michael Connors and Richard Peterson for judging the award.

The 2001 prize is currently being judged.

Mailout to Schools

In July 2000 the Archives co-sponsored a mailout to state secondary schools of a package of resource materials to assist students and teachings in dealing with same-sex issues in their studies and personal lives. The mailout was organised jointly by ALGA and Context, the Melbourne-based network of teachers and youth workers interested in gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender issues, and was made possible by a grant of \$1100 for mailing costs by the ALSO Foundation.

The resource package comprised:

- the summary of findings from a national study in 1998 on the sexuality, health and well-being of same sex attracted young people
- a leaflet outlining the support, education and advocacy work of Parents & Friends of Lesbians and Gays (P-FLAG) – including a recommended reading list.
- an annotated list of books for or about young adults from a specialist sexuality bookshop in Melbourne, Hares & Hyenas.
- a leaflet for same sex attracted youth from the Victorian AIDS Council
- an order form for published papers from a community conference on young people and sexualities in 1998 organised by Context,
- a reference list compiled by ALGA about Australian gay and lesbian history, and
- a complimentary copy of a book published by ALGA in 1995, *A History of the Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras* by Graham Carbery.

We acknowledge the support of all the above mentioned groups who made the mailout possible.

Due to increases in the cost of parcel postage, along with GST, our grant only allowed us to mail to state secondary schools (each item cost \$2.45 to post). Extending the mail out to independent schools has been put on hold until funds permit (another \$500 needed). Support from members who would like to assist this project would be much appreciated.

ALGA can supply copies of the package to interested members. Send \$5 (covers postage).

Storage issues

In late April 2000, ALGA took the bold step of renting commercial storage for a year to deal with our space shortage. The crisis came when we had to find a home for 13 display panels and four large crates from History Inverted's very successful travelling exhibition, 'Forbidden Lives Bold Passions', which ALGA auspiced a few years ago. With some of our longstanding committee members moving house in the last year, we no longer enjoy the luxury of free space in garages, spare rooms and under the house to alleviate our space problems. The panels and crates take up about half of the rented space, and the rest is filled with international and duplicate periodicals, about half of our book collection, and some infrequently

used but large and valuable collections of personal and group records. The rental cost for one year is nearly \$1600, and we took the decision knowing that on our current fundraising capacity, this was likely to be an unsustainable ongoing expense, but in the hope that the year would buy us time to come to a more satisfactory solution to our space difficulties.

Unless we find a speedy solution to the space problem, the display panels will be disposed of after May, with their contents of course preserved. This would be done with great regret, because the panels are of high quality and would undoubtedly be useful for future exhibitions ... if only we could find a place to keep them in the meantime, or better still, arrange for them to be used as a community asset. It also saddens us that our book collection, which we know would have great interest to many Archives users, is in boxes and not easily accessible.

At the moment we are in the process of forming a task force to assist ALGA in the quest for more space, but should any members be in a position to offer storage space, money, or concrete ideas that might assist the task force, we would be delighted to hear from you. Phone or email ALGA President Graham Willett on (03) 9482 1184, gwillett@unimelb.edu.au

Our thanks to Alison and Laurie for responding to our call for support in 2000 by donating towards the cost of storage.

Archives at Midsumma

The Archives ran a History Walk on Sunday 28 January as part of the Midsumma Festival. Starting at the Melbourne Town Hall, 40-odd people moved north through the CBD, ending at the Carlton Gardens. Commentary by Graham Willett and Wayne Murdoch with the assistance of Rohan Storey.

We also had our usual stall at Carnival on Sunday 4 February. Lots of people stopped by to admire our posters and badges and photos, asking questions and sharing stories.

ALGA and the new tax rules

Being a shoe-string budget organisation, and well under the \$50,000 annual turnover threshold, ALGA is not registered for the GST. This means that our membership fee, which remains \$20pa, \$5

pa concession (plus \$1 joining fee), **does not include GST**. However ALGA is required to have an ABN, and this will appear on all of our receipts in future (it's also in our newsletter masthead).

All organisations which previously had tax deductibility for donations, as ALGA has since 1993, had to re-apply to have their status endorsed under the new tax laws. ALGA is pleased to advise that the Australian Taxation Office has endorsed ALGA as a deductible gift recipient (DGR) as from 1 July 2000. Words to this effect will appear on all receipts for donations.

ALGA has also received endorsement from the Taxation Office of its status as an income tax exempt charity (first obtained in 1996). This won't have any direct bearing on members, but it is important to ALGA, which would otherwise have to fill in annual tax returns (and pay tax if we were ever to get enough income!)

Recent acquisitions

We thank all of the people mentioned below for their donations of the following materials:

- ◆ Artwork from Midsumma exhibition 2000 by Travis de Jong
- ◆ CDs of Sydney Gay and Lesbian History Walks donated by Craig Johnston. Craig also donated an extensive file of records relating to the 1993 state election in Bligh, NSW (seat held by Clover Moore).
- ◆ CD-Rom copies of Barry Mckay's oral history interviews (which provide the basis for his ABC Radio program – see elsewhere in this newsletter). Barry also copied our own audio taped interviews to CR-Rom, ensuring their preservation for many more years.
- ◆ Exhibits to display of body art organised by Frank and Leonie Osowski
- ◆ Miscellaneous Australian and NZ periodicals from 1970s donated by David Hilliard
- ◆ A wide ranging ephemera collection, spanning 1980s and 1990s, donated by Mark Riley
- ◆ Ephemera collection of Sydney 1970s and 1980s gay and lesbian activism, donated by Judy McDonald, includes original artwork from early Gay Solidarity Group events (1979)

◆ Books and ephemera have been donated by our regular contributors Geoff A, Ken Lovett, Mannie de Saxe and others.

We also thank those who have helped us fill vital gaps in our periodicals collection:

◆ David Wootton for copies of *OutRage* that we missed out on.

Do You Happen to Have?

The following issues are being sought by the Archives to fill gaps in otherwise complete series:

- ◆ *Adelaide GT* No 114 (16 May 97)
- ◆ *Bliss* (Melb) No 18 (1995)
- ◆ *Brother Sister* (Qld), No 33 (2 Dec 94) or any from 2000
- ◆ *Lesbiana* nos 38 (Aug 95), 56 (Apr 97)
- ◆ *Melbourne Star Observer* Nos 281, 283, 286, 288, 290, 293, 298, 300
- ◆ *Panda* (Canberra), Vol 3 No 4 (1995) and Vol 4 No 8 (1996)
- ◆ *Sydney Gay Liberation Newsletter* Vol 1 No 4 (1972), No 14 (1973)

Thanks

The Archives gratefully acknowledges the following people for making donations to the Archives over the past year:

The ALSO Foundation	Leigh Keen
Jane Attard	KL
KWA	Richard Peterson
Laurie Bebbington	Ian Purcell
Mitch Cleary	Richard Stone
John Cook	John Storey
Mannie de Saxe	Alison Thorne
Anthony Gartner	Paul Williamson
DH	John Waugh
Libby Jamieson	Tony Wood

Farewell Rob

The Archives Treasurer, Rob Thurling, has retired from his job at the Bureau of Meteorology in Melbourne and moved to northern NSW, where he grew up. Rob has been involved in the Archives virtually since the early 1980s, being Treasurer for the last 14 years. Besides his careful stewardship of the Archives coffers, especially the period when ALGA was accountable for the Federal Government grant that funded the lesbian touring exhibition, *Forbidden Love Bold Passions*, Rob will be remembered for his generous hospitality. Many AGMs were held at Rob's Ivanhoe house, along with a host of dinners and functions for the Archives' committee and volunteers. That same Ivanhoe house also housed a great bulk of Archives material and equipment. We might have lost a great Treasurer, but ALGA has gained a wonderful networker in Northern NSW! Happy retirement Rob.

Welcome Ken and Mannie

We are delighted to hear that Kendall Lovett and his partner Mannie de Saxe will be moving from NSW to live in Melbourne very soon. Ken and Mannie have been active supporters and collectors for ALGA for many years, and we look forward to being in closer touch than has been possible in the past.

Thanks to Richard Stone

Our longtime Canberra contact and newspaper clipper, Richard Stone, has retired in the past year from his job at the National Library, and will no longer be in a position to collect for the Archives. We are much indebted to Richard for his diligence and commitment as an interstate volunteer for ALGA over many years, and wish him a long and happy retirement.

Vale Max Grant

Max Grant, co-founder in 1959 of Melbourne's oldest camp social group, The Boilers, died suddenly at his home on 22 September 2000, aged 85. Max was a driving force in the Boilers for over

40 years. The Cup Day function at Max's Mitcham home was a perennial on the Boilers calendar, and Max's fund-raising efforts with raffles and jam-making were legendary.

Max was one of the first people to take part in the Archives oral history project when he was interviewed by Graham Carbery in 1983.

The Archives extends condolences to all Max's friends, and especially his friend Frank.

New books

Several books of gay and lesbian history have been published recently, among them:

Graham Willett, *Living Out Loud: A History of Gay and Lesbian Activism*, Allen and Unwin

David L. Phillips and Graham Willett (eds), *Australia's Homosexual Histories: Gay and Lesbian Perspectives V*, Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives and the Australian Centre for Lesbian and Gay Research

Jim Wafer, Erica Southgate and Lyndall Coan, *Out in the Valley: Hunter Gay and Lesbian Stories*, Newcastle Region Library

Robert Aldrich and Garry Wotherspoon (eds), *Who's Who in Gay and Lesbian History*, Routledge

Vol 1: From Antiquity to WWII

Vol 2: From WWII to the Present Day

Clive Faro, *Street Seen: A History of Oxford St*, Melbourne University Press

GLP5: Special offer

To celebrate the release of *Australia's Homosexual Histories: Gay and Lesbian Perspectives V*, and the Archives' involvement in this important publishing project, we are offering copies for \$20, including postage. An order form is enclosed with this newsletter.

GLP5 includes publication of an important annotated index compiled by ALGA committee member, Wayne Murdoch, of items about homosexuality in the Melbourne *Truth* from 1913-1945. For a long time *Truth* one of the few media that made any mention of homosexuality, albeit in a sensational and biased way, and Wayne's index is a vital research tool for those looking for entry

points to other potential sources of information, such as court records or private papers.

GLP5 is not being commercially distributed, so any assistance that members can offer in getting GLP into bookshops – or encouraging interested friends to buy direct from us – will be much appreciated.

We are also keen to get copies into libraries and bookshops. If you are in a position to help with distribution (especially outside Melbourne and Sydney) please get in touch with us at gwillett@unimelb.edu.au.

OzHomoHist

OzHomoHist is an email-based discussion group that arose at the first Homosexual Histories conference in 1998. If you are interested in joining the group, email Graham Willett on gwillett@unimelb.edu.au and he will arrange it. It is not a high-volume list, but it has about 90 members and is a useful way to keep in touch with events, as well as a means to get questions answered (Like: who was the first person arrested at a gay political event?) and information out to people.

Bibliography on the web

Graham Willett's much awaited book, **Living Out Loud; a history of gay and lesbian activism in Australia** (Allan & Unwin, \$35), reached bookshops in October, and is being well-received in the gay and non-gay media. The bibliography for Graham's book is on the ALGA website at:

<http://home.vicnet.net.au/~alga/>

Thanks to Mary Mavroudis for her help with this project, and to Mary and Steven King for the groundwork in setting up ALGA's website.

Federation Fund Grant to Pride

Congratulations to the Pride March Melbourne on its success in obtaining \$20,000 from the community grants scheme of the Centenary of Federation to produce an exhibition depicting 100 years of homosexuality in Australia. The funds were used to produce images that will be carried in the Centenary Parade on 6 May 2001. The images were first displayed during Pride March on Sunday

21 January, and in a stand-alone exhibition during Midsumma.

ALGA supported the Pride application, and has been working with Pride in locating images. We also assist in developing captions for selected images.

(Groups in Sydney and Adelaide also received grants under this scheme.)

History on the Wireless

Barry Mckay's radio program based on his interviews with older Australian gay men will be aired on the Hindsight program (ABC Radio National) on February 25 2001. Those of us who heard excerpts from the tapes at the AHH3 Conference would urge you not to miss this program.

An indication of the quality comes from the fact that at the recent CBAA awards (Community Broadcasting Association of Australia) OUT-FM took out the prize for 'Excellence in Spoken Word Programming News, Current Affairs & Documentaries' for Barry's 'Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence Sydney Lesbian and Gay History Walk' documentary series.

History and crime

Two recently published books on unsolved murders provide, incidentally, rich insights into links between parts of the gay, police and criminal worlds in Melbourne and Sydney of the 1970s and 1980s. Robin Bowles' *No Justice* is about the disappearance in 1978 of Melbourne transsexual Adele Bailey, whose body was found in a mineshaft at Bonnie Doon in 1995, close to the property on which Jennifer Tanner was murdered in 1985. *The Ghost of Ludwig Gertsch*, by SD Harvey is about the murder in 1991 of a man who had inherited a multimillion dollar fortune built from nightclubs and Kings Cross businesses. Belated inquests in both cases pointed to foul play and likely culprits, but in neither case was the evidence strong enough for charges to be laid. Both books present interesting views of the facts, but for historians of the gay worlds of Melbourne and Sydney, particularly in the era before decriminalisation, they also provide especially useful insights. Bowles for the interviews with a number of Melbourne trannies who were friends of Adele Bailey; and Harvey for writing explicitly

about previously rumoured connections between gay and lesbian entrepreneurs in Sydney (some still living) and corrupt police. Both books are available at Hares and Hyenas Bookshop in Melbourne. Visit their website on <http://www.hares-hyenas.com.au>.

Queer Spot

During 2000, ALGA has contributed an alphabetic series of historical snippets for the regular Queer Spot columns of the Melbourne and Brisbane editions of *BrotherSister*. We've had everything from "B" for Beats, "F" for Femmes, "J" for the Joy of Lesbian Sex, "M" for Mollies, "U" for Uranians, "W" for Wolfenden.

We got as far as "X" (and how easy was that – thanks Jodie!) when Satellite crashed to earth, taking *BrotherSister* with it. Within a week, however, we were up and running again in the new *MCV*. Judging from informal feedback, and the competitive bidding from *MCV* and *BnewS* (the other new gay paper), the columns are widely read and enjoyed.

A sample column, "S is for Storer", is reprinted below:

S is for Storer

Dr Robert Vivian Storer, an early Australian sex educationist and venereologist, was born in Adelaide in 1900. In the mid-1930s he practiced in London before settling permanently in Melbourne in 1939.

Storer was active in sex-education and family planning circles in Australia in the late 1920s and early 1930s, and was a founding consultant of the Australian Family Planning Association when it was formed in 1928. He later left the Association following disagreements with them over the best means of educating people about sexuality and contraception.

He was openly bisexual throughout most of his life, which is reflected in the popular sex-education books he wrote throughout the 1930s. His basic premise of individual sexual freedom (as long as no-one else was harmed) was very much at odds with popular feeling on issues such as contraception, bisexuality and homosexuality in Australia in the 1930s.

Storer's sexual adventures were often the subject of tabloid newspaper stories. In 1931, he was accused of holding all-male orgies on his yacht in the Hawkesbury River, with youths he had contacted through newspaper ads. Five years later, while living in London, Storer's 16 year old office boy was drowned in the Thames at a similar party. And, during the Second World War, Storer was the subject of a police investigation into his affair with an 18 year old soldier – evidence was collected by spying through the keyhole of Storer's flat!

He died in Melbourne in 1958.

This is Wayne Murdoch's piece for Queer Spot in BrotherSister. Dr Storer features in the Sydney Centenary of Federation Gay and Lesbian History Exhibition thanks to Wayne's efforts at uncovering his life.

Why an Archives – and how you can contribute

The Archives is the memory of the gay and lesbian community. We aim to preserve records of Australian homosexual life, past and present, for use by future generations.

The Archives has been going since 1978. The collection of periodicals is probably the core of the Archives' collection.

But we also seek records of gay and lesbian life outside of organised groups, through personal letters, photographs and other memorabilia, including from times before there was a gay movement. We also encourage those with recollections of pre-movement days to record their recollections for posterity through the Archives' Oral History Project.

You can support the Archives financially by becoming a member (\$20/\$5), or by making a donation. Donations are tax deductible.

You can contribute as a volunteer. There is a range of tasks to suit people's different talents and levels of commitment. For example:

- ◆ listing and ordering parts of the collection that are of interest to you, eg. at present we have no listings of badges, videos or photographs
- ◆ taking care of the collection of a group that has special significance to you
- ◆ photocopying and ordering press clippings