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NEWSLETTER

No 2 July, 1985.

EDITORIAL

Well here we are again, with our second newsletter.

Our trivia question this month is: When was the first AGA newsletter published? Now don't be rude! Yes, it was a long time ago; April, 1983 in fact. We won't go into a detailed explanation as to why its taken so long to get the second one published, mainly because we haven't got a reasonable explanation.

Anyway enough of that. It is our intention to publish a newsletter on a quarterly basis from now on. It won't be a major production but it will keep our members and friends informed about what is going on at the Archives.

Let's face it, we have limited resources and personnel and with all our ongoing commitments it has not been possible in the recent past to generate enough interest to publish a regular newsletter. We feel that by containing its size we have a better chance of producing something on a regular basis.

FOUNDING PRESIDENT RETIRES

At the Archives weekly meeting on 21 May, 1985, Graham Carbery, founder of the Australian Gay Archives announced his intention to stand down from the presidency at the AGM in October.

Graham said he intends to continue being involved in the Archives work but not to the same extent as in the past.

Graham has been instrumental in seeing the Archives grow into a major collection and resource and has guided its growth with vigour. The meeting expressed its gratitude to Graham for his efforts and the support he has given to all volunteer workers at the Archives.

ARCHIVES DINNER AND RAFFLE

Raising money is a problem which has to be faced by almost all gay groups, well the Archives is no different. So, in an effort to boost our meagre funds we have organised a raffle.

The prize is 12 bottles of 1980 Vintage Veuve Clicquot Champagne (a high class raffle, this one). Tickets are \$1 each and the draw will be held at the Laird Hotel in Abbotsford on THURSDAY 25 JULY.

The management of the Laird has kindly donated \$100 towards the prize.

We are having a dinner at the Laird on the night of the draw. The cost is \$10 per head for a three course meal and coffee, drinks extra. If you would like to come please contact us as soon as possible to book seats as the Laird's dining room only seats about 34.

We hope you can make it.

REORGANISATION OF THE ARCHIVES

Space, either the lack of it or the inefficient use of it, has long been one of our biggest problems.

We managed to overcome the lack of space some time ago when John Willis gave us the use of a second room at The Hub. Recently however, we had to reorganise the collection to enable us to use our space more efficiently. Over the past year we have been fortunate in attracting a number of new volunteers, but we have had difficulty in finding space for everyone to work.

Under the new set up we have one room which is used solely to store material, while the other room is used as a work room. So far this arrangement is working well and everyone seems to be happy with the layout.

TASK ALLOCATION/JOB DESCRIPTIONS

At a recent Archives meeting it was decided to commit to paper the tasks people were working on, or were interested in working on. It was felt this was necessary so that all volunteers have a clear picture of what work is being undertaken at any particular time and how it is progressing.

It was also decided to prepare job descriptions for each of the tasks currently in progress so that other interested people will find it easier to become involved.

NEWSPAPER CLIPPING AFTERNOON

Oh dear, what a backlog! It has been months since we had a serious go at cutting and pasting clippings. But things are about to change because on the afternoon of 6 July we're all going to get stuck into sorting, cutting and gluing as many of the hundreds and hundreds of unprocessed clippings as we can. Sounds like a dry task doesn't it? Well to help things along, and wash away some of the dust, we might have have the occasional little sip of wine. Hopefully the intake of vino will not effect our productivity.

GAY CONTRIBUTION TO 'STORY OF VICTORIA' EXHIBITION

The 'Gays in Victorian History & Gay History of Victoria' project was initiated on 27 March, 1985 as a response to a request from the Museum of Victoria that the AGA might be interested in contributing to the 'Story of Victoria' Exhibition that the Museum was planning as part of Victoria's 150th Birthday Celebrations.

A committee was set up to discuss what form the exhibition might take and to coordinate contributions from the various gay groups in Victoria. A meeting with the Exhibition Director, Judi Maxted, on 24 April, and a tour of the space allocated for the project resulted in a tentative date (19 June, 1986) being set for our part in the exhibition. This was thought to be appropriate, as the exhibition, (to run for 8 weeks) would coincide with Stonewall '86.

The date will be confirmed within the next few weeks and Victoria's various gay groups will be contacted with requests for their contributions to the project.

ORAL HISTORY

Many of us are disappointed at the lack of action on this project. A number of people have shown interest in conducting interviews but unfortunately no-one has taken on the task of co-ordinating the project.

We are hopeful that within the next month or so we will get our act together so that this vitally important project will be resumed.

More info in the next newsletter.

INCOMPLETE SETS OF PERIODICALS

Set out below is a list of missing issues of periodical which we would very much like to get our hands on. If you, or anyone you know have some of these we would be very grateful if you would donate them to the Archives.

Adelaide Homosexual Alliance	(1979) No 2, 3.
Australian Guys (Sydney)	all of them!
Bay City Guys (Melb)	any of the early newsletters.
Gay (Sydney)	1, 7, 9, 16, 28, 29, 31, 87, 97, 99, 101, 102, 103, 104, 106 onwards.
Gay Health & Welfare Workers Newsletter (Melb)	(1980) Vol 2 No 2.
Gay Images (Perth)	(1978) Vol 1 No's 1, 9.
Gay Left (U.K.)	1, 2, 11 onwards.
Gay News (U.K.)	all issues prior to issue 140.
Gayzette (Sydney)	(1973) No 2. (1974) No 15, 23 onwards.
The Libertine (Sydney)	(1980) No 3, 7, 11, 37 onwards.
The Oxford Weekender (Sydney)	50, 56.
Stallion (Sydney)	any of the early issues.

INTERSTATE REPORT

Our President, Graham Carbery, visited Sydney recently and met with Michael Fenaughty, Robert Lawrie and Ken Lovett all of whom have been active supporters of the Archives for some years.

Michael has continued to do a lot of work following up gay groups in New South Wales (with little reward, unfortunately) and regularly sends material to us. Robert and Ken have also been of great help in spreading the word of the Archives' work and collecting material.

Chris Smith in Adelaide is attempting to set up a local archive. He will continue to send copies of South Australian material to us as well as publicising the work of the AGA.

Over the last few months we have been receiving a regular flow of material from Darwin. We have been pleasantly surprised at the amount of activity up north and are grateful to the Darwin Gay Group for their support.

The work of our interstate contacts is of great value to us. Without it we have little hope of maintaining our credibility as Australia's national gay archive.

VOLUNTEERS

Over recent months we have gained the services of three new workers. Their arrival is timely because of the backlog of material which needs to be sorted and stored.

Being the national gay archive we receive a lot of publications and other information from the gay press and gay groups as well as donations of material from individuals. Obviously the more people we have working on the collection the more quickly stuff gets processed and becomes accessible to people. There are many different and interesting jobs to be done. Volunteers are encouraged to undertake those tasks which are of interest to them and to work on them at their own pace according to the time they have available.

If you are thinking that you might like to get involved in the Archives in some way but are unsure as to what you would like to do why not come along, see how the place operates and meet us. You will then be in a better position to decide whether it is the sort of activity you would like to be involved in.

ARCHIVES NOW OPEN ON TUESDAY NIGHTS

For the past three months or so the Archives has been open on a Tuesday evening as well as Thursdays. The aim of the Tuesday opening is to allow workers more time to carry out the tasks of processing and organising materials. We have decided not to publicise our Tuesday sessions too widely so that we are free from interruptions. However if someone wishes to visit because Thursday is not convenient then they are welcome to do so.

JAMES FRASER OBITUARY

The Canadian Gay Archives suffered a great loss when, on 11 March, 1985, James Fraser died. James, through his tireless work and total dedication, over many years, was largely responsible, together with Alan Miller, in consolidating the standing of the Canadian Gay Archives as the pre-eminent gay archive in the world.

In addition to holding down a full time job James published the CGA journal The Gay Activist and was co-author of a book Lesbian & Gay Heritage of Toronto.

James' influence has also been felt in Australia in the organisation of the Australian Gay Archives. We join with our Canadian sisters and brothers in remembering James as a symbol of Gay determination and strength.

SEARCHING OLD NEWSPAPERS

Our treasurer, John Willis, has spent many hours over the past couple of months at the La Trobe Library in Melbourne sifting through old newspapers. John has paid particular attention to the Melbourne 'Truth', having looked at every issue from 1960 back to 1938 - and he hasn't finished yet.

It's interesting to note the quaint way in which homosexuality was treated by the press in the years prior to say, 1960, compared with today. It was rare for the word 'homosexuality' to be mentioned. Typical of the headlines of the 1940's and 50's was: 'Man on serious charges involving sailor', or 'Woman lived as man for 40 years'.

We hope to publish some of the more interesting stories in future newsletters and perhaps in the gay press.

GAYDAY '85

The Archives was among the many gay groups present on a very wet Saturday in February to celebrate Gayday. Despite the rotten weather, we, along with everyone else present, did our best to enjoy ourselves. Our thanks and congratulations to ALSO for the effort they put in. We feel sure that if it had not rained it would have proved to be the most successful Gayday so far. The scene on the oval when we arrived to set up our stall (just as the rain started) was fantastic. We look forward to participating in many more Gaydays and hope that next years organisers will not be deterred by this years set-back and continue to be innovative.

STONEWALL '85

The Archives had a stall again at this years Stnewall Festival which was held at Melbourne University on Saturday 29 June. The most popular feature of our display was our collection of badges. Whenever we have a presentation at a gay activity our badges create a great amount of interest. Many people ask if they can buy some of them but unfortunately we don't have any spares.

MAJOR DONATIONS

Over the past twelve months or so we have received several significant donations of material.

John Lee, a long time activist in Adelaide, who is now living in Sydney, donated his personal collection of material which included a lot of early material relating to Adelaide groups and activities. Much of this material is rare and has added considerably to our collection.

The records of the Sydney Gay Writers Collective have been passed on to us.

We are delighted to have received a two volume set of newspaper cuttings collected by Monty. These cuttings do back to the 1920's.

Recently, Liz Ross, one of the founding members of the Archives, donated in excess of 100 books from her library.

We would like to express our thanks and gratitude to all those groups and individuals who have donated material to the Archives. Future newsletters will bring you details of further donations.