



The Newsletter that reaches across Australia

August/Sept, 2013

Website: www.countrynetwork.com.au

Secretary: PO Box 176, New Town, TASMANIA 7008

Country Network

President's Message

Our message board has been rolled-out with a large number of members already having visited the site. The timing of this roll-out just so happens at a time when we once again lose a significant number of members who have decided not to renew. Past studies clearly show that most members are either new to Country Network or they are longtime members; which highlights our continued failure to retain a significant number of members beyond two years. **The most common reason given by members who decide not to renew is the lack of contact from fellow members.** Every

agm someone always suggests the idea that we all call a fellow member with whom we are not familiar. Everybody applauds this once again to be a great idea, but once again it fails to eventuate. We need to accept the reality that for most, this is outside their comfort zone because, despite the enthusiasm for the idea, it just doesn't happen. So let's stop beating our heads against a brick wall and find something that does work.

Introducing the Country Network Message Board.

Country Network can be accused of being "cliquey", not by intention, but by our own anxieties and comfort levels. We take those nervous first few steps into making new friends and with a sigh of relief we settle in to a comfortable life with these new friends. But still others are joining Country Network and seeking the same. They appear in this newsletter or membership list as mere names on a bit of paper. O.K., so we concede that very few of us will pick up the phone and welcome them to Country Network. (thank you to those who do)

Visit the Country Network Message Board.

We are fully aware the Message Board can only reach those with internet access, but that is the direction we need to pursue if we are to continue to be a worthwhile, valid social network.

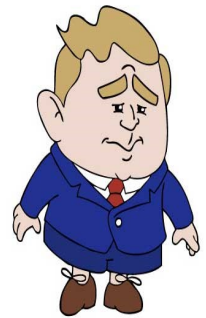
Back to the Message Board to reach its potential we require members to actively participate and not just be passive observers. We need members to start sharing more of themselves. Regardless of how mundane or bizarre your interest may be, it is sure to be equally enjoyed by a fellow member who is just waiting to share it with you. So please, start (or add to) a discussion on our Message Board right now and **share a little something of yourself.** You just may be pleasantly surprised to discover you're not the only boring conservative or weirdo freak among us. We already know you're not the only gay in the village.

Use the Country Network Message Board to network.

There are so many members doing so many interesting things; let's not find out afterwards there were others who may very well enjoyed sharing these experiences with you. Remember, we are in fact members of a social network, so let's improve our actual networking with fellow members, especially with those we are not yet familiar, by sharing a little something of ourselves on the Message Board and help grow this network.

A little love and affection in everything you do will make the world a better place, with or without you.

Neil



From the Assistant Editor:

As I've just returned from a trip North where I visited several members and interacted with many more, I'm going to describe my trip in this editorial. My conclusion is that it's no accident that our Coffs Harbour/Bellingen group put on such a successful Corroboree in April – there is such a great feeling of camaraderie between them.

After two nights in Canberra, I flew to Coffs to stay 2 nights in the "Tin Shed", the imaginative Fernmount home of David B and Brian M, with spectacular views towards the sea. The night of my arrival coincided with their weekly dinner of gay friends at the Coffs Harbour Hotel, where I met several members and we took in a drag show competition. My initiation the next morning was to climb to the top of the steep hill on the property with David. The views were appropriately rewarding! In the afternoon Nou P arrived, and we had some energetic games of table tennis.

We set off early next morning to drive north to attend the Tyalgum Classical Music Festival (those who attended the Mt Warning Safari may remember lovely Tyalgum set in the caldera surrounding Mt Warning). Staying at the local pub over the weekend, we were able to walk to the festival events. The atmosphere was informal and there were some outstanding performances, especially on piano, harp, guitar and didgeridoo. The program on Election Night was especially diverting!

After returning back to Fernmount on the Monday, Nou P, Hector V, John C and I went out for dinner at their favourite pub in Bellingen before going to the latters' lovely house for the night. I enjoyed sitting on the deck looking into the rain-forest, with the silence broken only by screeching yellow-breasted black cockatoos. We drove to Sawtell that morning to have coffee overlooking the sea and await the arrival of David B, John C and David P from their regular 38km bike ride. Then, Nou took me to the house which he shares with Guy M, where I enjoyed conversation, Nou's lovely meals (remember that he cooked for the corroboree) and looking into the luxuriant sub-tropical vegetation from their deck. I needed to wash some clothes, and with their machine temporarily disabled, we took the washing to be done at the house of David P and Bernie G! On my final morning I joined Nou in their gay lawn bowling group. I play golf rather than bowls and caused some laughter when I used the wrong bias and the bowl ended up near the jack on the adjacent rink!! I was reluctant to leave at midday, especially as I was missing the drag show where Nou and Hector were to perform in dazzling fashion that night.

On my final night in Canberra with John P and Peter R, they organised a pot-luck dinner with three gay friends, including one member of the gay and lesbian choir QWIRE. We sang solos, duets and trios around John's lovely grand piano.

It was a great experience of CN hospitality and friendship which I hope that I can finally reciprocate by inducing these sub-tropical guys to come south and include Mallacoota!!

John R



Country Social Network Inc.
(Reg Y2063541)



Future Social Events Around Australia

WA Sunday, 6th October, Morning Coffee in the city (see page 7)

VIC Sunday, 13th October, Pot Luck Lunch—12 noon (see page 6)

SA **Adelaide AGM—25th-28th October, 2013. Adelaide awaits you!**

VIC 2014 Corroboree, Queenscliff—24th-28th April (See page 6)

(Please contact me [Cliff 0422 799 729 or e-mail: cliff11@inet.net.au] if you have any important events in your State).

Contributors to Magazine:

David T.	Neil W.	Pete B.
John R.	Herb C.	Frank J.
Cliff M	Barry S.	David F.
Peter T.	Allan A.	

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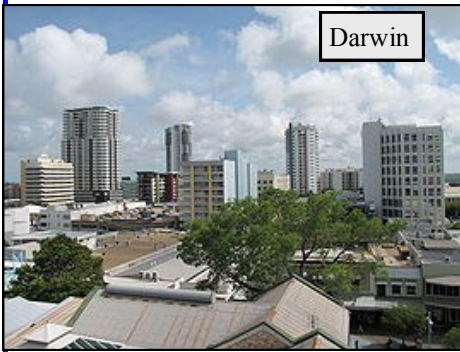
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BRITISH HUMOR

| These are classified ads, which were actually placed in U.K.
| Newspapers:

| FREE PUPPIES: 1/2 Cocker Spaniel, 1/2 sneaky neighbour's dog.
| COWS, CALVES - NEVER BRED: Also 1 gay bull for sale...
| JOINING NUDIST COLONY! Must sell washer and dryer £100..
| WEDDING DRESS FOR SALE: Worn once by mistake. Call
| Stephanie.
| (Jokes thanks to Allan A—SA)

FROM DARWIN TO DILI



In 1976 I had been back in Sydney nearly 6 months and needed a job. So on 4th March, I found myself in Darwin, only 14 months after Cyclone Tracy.

Many of the staff at the Esplanade Government Hostel were recent asylum seekers from East Timor, especially the women serving in the cafeteria. They were very nice people. For most of my time in the Top End, their country remained under Indonesian occupation. So when it finally achieved independence I was keen to see it.

In June 2013, Mind Ventures offered a visit to Darwin, followed by East Timor. On a beautiful dry season day, 28th June, I drove from the airport to Palms City Resort. The people in the taxi had been with me in Bendigo last year.

It was good to be back in Darwin. Felt much hotter than Brisbane. On Saturday the 29th we had a full program, first a Jumping Crocodile Cruise on Adelaide River, then most of the day in Litchfield Park. I'd only been in Litchfield once before, with Ken Whifton of Perth in 1994. I enjoyed it again. The beautiful waterfalls are better signposted now and the picnic facilities and toilets improved.

On Sunday morning was a short walking tour of State Square, where I spent so much of my time in retirement, 1993-2003. Local historian Pearl Ogden took us past Government House, Supreme Court, and into the massive Parliament House. Lunch in an open air café in Smith Street, then Kathy De La Rue, a librarian friend, spoke on Darwin's history at the uni-

versity. We walked slowly down through the George Brown Botanical Gardens and had dinner at Mindil Beach Markets. Another old friend, John Hendy, took me to his unit for a few hours.

Monday, my last full day in Darwin, was especially beautiful. We had an excellent guide, Gary Gallagher, from the Military Museum at East Point, which is much enhanced since I last saw it in the 1980s. The harbour was green and magical. We saw the Tracy exhibition in the Museum and Art Gallery and enjoyed dinner again beside the harbour at the Trailer Boat Club, lit up by a display of fireworks for Territory Day.

Then on Tuesday I flew to a new country. My first time on a little Air North plane. Very soon we were coming down over the mountain backbone to sea level and paying \$US30 for an entry visa. Along the sea front to Discovery Inn, a good lunch shower and sleep till Happy Hour on the deck upstairs. Most of the group would not arrive in Dili till the next day.

On Wednesday, I got some US dollars, the local currency, from the ANZ Bank and walked along the grey beach, past a statue of the Virgin Mary from 1954. On Thursday all the group had arrived. We had morning coffee (for which Timor is famous) at a café staffed by abused women. Then to the Resistance Museum on the site of an Indonesian prison. After lunch in the modern Timor Plaza Mall, a long walk up to the Cristo Rei (Christ the King) statue. No Rio doesn't need to fear the competition, but I had a charming guide, Alfonso, and the ocean views were fine. Our final stop was in the Santa Cruz cemetery, famous for the massacre by Indonesian troops in 1991.

On Friday, again fortified by an omelette from the handsome Pakistani chef, we had another full program. Charles Scheiner told us East Timor is much too dependent on oil and gas and should be concentrating more on agriculture. We went through another former prison, Comarca, and shuddered at the tiny dark cells.

The evening harbour cruise was the part of the program I enjoyed least. We must take off our shoes and socks and wade to reach a small boat, which took us to a very ordinary larger boat

for an alright meal. If I'd known in advance I would have stayed in the hotel.

The last 2 days involved much more driving, and the roads vary in quality. Some are potholed, some are being reconstructed with long dusty stretches. On Saturday we visited an orphanage, then drove up into the hills to the Australian War Memorial at Dare. Australian soldiers fought the Japanese in Timor in 1942-43. Our local helpers were brutally punished.

From Dare, we drove southwest along the coast. I was reminded of the Spanish Costa Brava in 1957, before it was much developed. Lunch was in a seaside restaurant with spotless toilets. We also saw the old Dutch fort at Maubara, the church at Liquiça where people were burned alive by the militia in 1999, and a crumbling old Portuguese prison, Ai Pelo. It looks romantic now but has been a place of exile for political activists from the far-flung empire, some dying from TB and even leprosy.

Sunday, 7th July, would see our longest drive, to Baucau in the northeast. The trip was supposed to take 3 hours. In fact it took nearly 6, but the first stop was interesting, especially for those who had missed Adelaide River. The soldiers at an army base fed chickens to their mascot crocodiles. Morning tea was in a humble café with primitive toilets. But the pousada in Baucau, when we finally arrived, was worth waiting for. A former Portuguese hotel being restored, cool, comfortable, with good food.

So now I've seen a tiny bit of Timor Leste. Its people have suffered greatly in recent years but they remain gracious and deserve a happier future.

Herb C.



In Memoriam



NOEL LEWINGTON – LIFE MEMBER – DIED 21st JULY, 2013

After 27 years of Country Network membership, and service, Noel left us recently.

It was wonderful for me, his partner of 36 years, to read the warm words given by so many of his friends. His gentlemanly nature was oft mentioned; his sense of humour was admired, and laughed at, by many. I used to say he was “the master of the one-liners!”

He was committed to sea travel, enjoying so many cruises with me in different parts of the world. It had been said “Don’t you like Australia mate; you’re always away!” The obvious answer was “Yes, that’s why we always come back.” And we did two circum-navigations of Australia in the last two years which says something for the marvellous country we call home.

Noel was a perfect home-maker who made me feel so comfortable and connected, and offered hospitality to many members over the years. I must say the fact we were not listed as Hosts was not to do with hospitality but the fact that we spent so little continuous time ‘at

home’.

When I was President, Noel, as do so many partners of the ‘workers’ in CN, would slave beside me, printing, sorting, enveloping, labelling, posting, and so on. Some of us get the plaudits; others stay quietly in the background.

His last eight weeks in hospital were not easy, and this was after more than a year of ‘not being well’, but it didn’t stop him from our final trip of 3½ months to and in Europe. I will admit to not knowing how ill he must have been. When one is together 24/7 the slow changes are not so obvious. The fact that he kept doing the touring until the day before he was hospitalised says much for his endurance, and what I believe was his determination that OUR trip would not be affected by his health.

His condition if he returned home would not have been a happy one, and one which I know Noel would not have enjoyed, and certainly not liked. We were blessed with a long and happy time together and I like to think he is now in a happier place.

Bless you my dear, for the joy and happiness you gave me.

Peter Toogood.



OCTOBER/NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER INPUT

Please note the next Newsletter is due to be issued on 1st November but maybe slightly delayed with the Adelaide AGM happening. So would appreciate your input to me by **29th October**.



Area Co-ordinator's Report—from the State of Handsome Men

I trust you all remembered to vote last week. The Senate ticket was quite confusing. I wonder if the Sex Party and the Rise Up Australia Party have a connection.

The State of Handsome Men has awoken from the winter slumber. Spring has sprung. The weather in Spring in Melbourne is highly volatile as are some of the men. Last week on Friday the temperature at 6AM was 20 degrees. Exactly one week later at the same time it was 4 degrees. So it is hard to know whether to throw the doona on or off.

Our 3 monthly dinners at Geelong, Mulgrave, and Gippsland have proved highly successful. On 13 October, Iwan and I are hosting a pot luck lunch. We already have acceptances including honoured guests from the banana region in NSW. I invite you all. **(See notice on page 6).**

I would like to congratulate our president and others who have got the Message Board up and running. What a great idea for members to connect.

I welcome our new Victorian members Wayne A from the Goulburn Valley, Brian T from the beautiful Dandenongs, and Leonard C from Melbourne.

Birthday greetings for September and October go to Eric C, Ken E, Kevin M, Kevin E, Keryn B, Peter R, Wayne A, and Reuben W.

Frank Jackson

Tambar Springs NSW



Accommodation ♦ Great Beer
Home Style Meals ♦ Great Pub
All at the **Royal Hotel**
Contact Brett & Rod on
Ph: 02 6744 2936

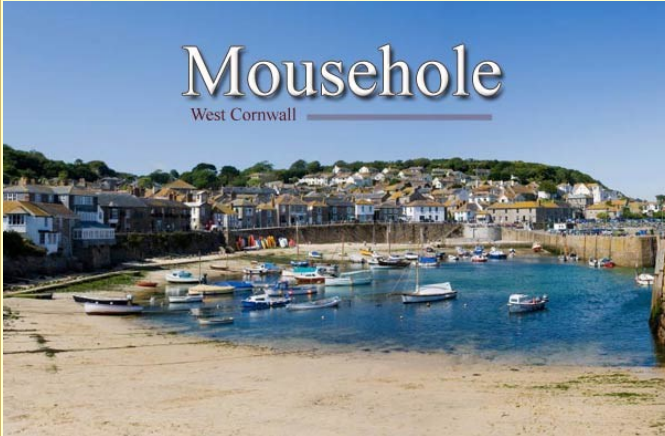
Spring is in the air and a young man's fancy turns to
(Photo courtesy Men of Max website)



Travels with Your Aunt

Mousehole:

I thought I'd take a drive around Cornwall to look at some of the off beat places. However, my cousin advised me against it saying if I was driving through Cornwall all I would see would be the dry stone walls farmers use as boundaries to their properties.



He recommended a week long rail-pass as the main line ran straight down the middle of Cornwall to Penzance. Spur lines run from this main line to coastal villages such as Mousehole (pronounced muzz'l). However, I did have to catch a bus to get to Land's End.

One day, travelling on a spur line I nearly fell off my seat when a man came and sat opposite me: It was Bob Hawke, right down to that hairdo. Then I remembered that Bob Hawke's parents came from the

North-West part of Yorke Peninsular, which had been settled by Cornish miners.

At the end of the week, I stayed in Plymouth and went down to a dock which had been caved out of a rock cliff face. There were two plaques there. The first commemorating the Mayflower which had left from there, the second commemorating more than one thousand Cornish people had gone to South Australia to mine the copper.



David F.

Mayflower in Plymouth Harbour by William Halsall (1882)

Pot Luck Lunch

SUNDAY, 13TH
OCTOBER AT
12 NOON

Frank and Iwan would be delighted if you accepted their kind invitation to a Pot Luck Lunch to be held at their residence—**U4/9 Mackay Ave, GLEN HUNTLEY. (VIC)**

Please bring a dish of your choice and whatever drinks you wish. Tea & Coffee will be available.



RSVP: Frank J. on (03)9576 7326 or 0415 446 959

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS



We hope you will enjoy meeting some of our members. Don't be shy, pick up the phone and contact another member from our Membership List: either in your area or anywhere in Australia.

For those who are already members, check the list and see who has joined so you can contact them to make them feel WELCOME!

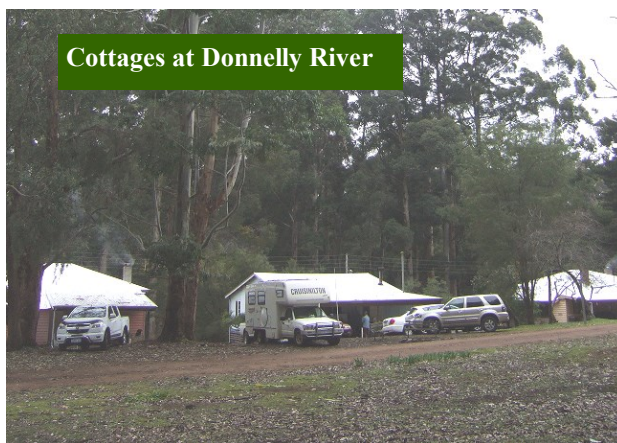
Rob E.	-	VIC	Noel P.	-	NSW
Wayne A.	-	VIC	David E.	-	WA
Leonard C	-	VIC	Frank H.	-	WA
Brian T	-	VIC	Pascal B.	-	WA
Robert L.	-	NSW			

NEXT COFFEE MORNING IN PERTH CITY WILL BE SUNDAY, 6TH OCTOBER



Bocelli's Espresso, Forrest Place (at the base of the escalator) in the Murray Street Mall.

[call cliff on 0422 799 729 if you have not been before and don't know where to go?]



Cottages at Donnelly River

Area Co-ordinator's Report—WA

As you read this, the weather should be warmer as Spring is here. There is a definite feel in the air at this time of the year of Summer approaching and I just love it. Dawn arriving earlier and the days becoming longer. And shorts time! Yes!

In the past month the WA mob had the weekend at Donnelly River where 13 blokes had a great weekend. Please refer the separate article for the experience. As previously mentioned this has become an annual event and is always successful. I would recommend this weekend to all members. I must compliment Ric Shell again for doing all the organising involved with the stay there.

For something closer, don't forget there is the Coffee-In-The-City mornings in Perth city on the first Sunday every month.

This month I have been working for the AEC (electoral commission) which has been quite an experience. Like all of you, I used to walk in, vote and then wait for the results. Working there, it is like an organised bee hive. So many things going on. From the preparatory duties before the election (like counting string! Yes it's true), working on the day and ensuring EVERYTHING balances, and then afterwards all the administration and follow up responsibilities. A lot of invisible work none of us would have realised. Yes, I enjoyed the whole thing.

Next month is the AGM in Adelaide which is closing in quickly. To all the members from WA I hope you have booked both the weekend and your flights. Just on AGMs, next year it will be hosted by Western Australia!

Best Regards, Peter Bedford.

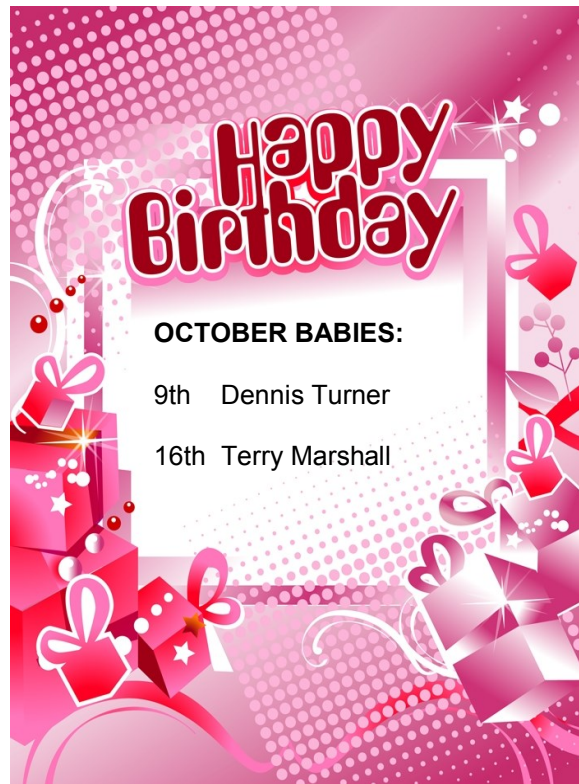


Donnelly River pics

See over...

Area Co-ordinator's Report-WA

(Cont'd from Page 7):



CN—NOTICE BOARD



- ◆ **VICTORIA** — THE STATE OF HANDSOME MEN'S MONTHLY GET-TOGETHER. On the first Monday of each month (unless Monday is a public holiday, then it moves to Tuesday), the guys get together for a fantastic evening meal. Prices at the restaurant are very reasonable—so for further information contact Brooce, Geelong on 03-5244-1265 or e-mail: adamsbd@optusnet.com.au. If you plan to attend please contact Brooce the Friday before.
- ◆ **WA**—Sunday morning coffee in Perth City. 10.30 am on the first Sunday of the month. Bocelli Espresso in Forrest Chase. (For details see notice on page 7).
- ◆ **Website Notice Board:** Don't forget to visit the NEW exciting Notice Board on the Website and **HAVE YOUR SAY**. It's a great place to exchange ideas and keep in touch about current events and happenings inside and outside CN.

PHOTOSHOTS FROM WA'S DONNELLY RIVER WEEKEND:



Photos courtesy Michael G.—the CN Papparazzi—no one is safe! Thanks Michael great shots

SOUTH OZZIE—AREA COORDINATOR'S REPORT

SUNSHINE STATE

On the 6th Aug I made a quick visit to Brisbane with the compliments of a cheap air fare on Jetstar and met up with CN members Geoff, Malcolm, Tony and Alf. Was great to get away from Adelaide's cold weather, but guys, coming for the AGM, I can promise you much warmer conditions.

INSIGHT

Just when I think I'm winning the rat race, along comes faster rats.

ADELAIDE'S GIANT PANDAS

Our zoo has over 1,800 animals and 300 species of birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, mammals and the only Giant Pandas in the Southern Hemisphere. situated right in the heart of the city. These wonderful creatures can be seen



without all the expense of going to China. Conditions are perfect for Wang Wang and Funi to get on and make a little son or daughter. But it is not going to happen without a helping hand. Reproductive experts from China have arrived to prepare and assist with artificial insemination along with natural breeding attempts.

LION KING

Our Monarto Zoo (about 40 minutes from Adelaide) is a free range zoo and is the largest in area of all the other Australian Zoos and now boasts to have the biggest Lion exhibit of 12, after 2 cubs, were born on 24/4.



FREE - FREE - FREE

Adelaide Metro - Bus, Train and Tram services for Seniors - is free, subject to some conditions. Should you wish to know how you can use this facility on your visit to Adelaide please feel free to contact me.

(Editor's Note -David T. has been unwell and we

wish him a speedy recovery. I hope he doesn't mind if I add a bit to his column: If you have internet you can enter *Adelaide Metro* into your browser and it will come up with the webpage for the Adelaide Metro System. Click on "Tickets" and move down to the heading "*Seniors*" and you will read the following. (However, if you don't have a computer, this is what it says):

Anyone who holds a valid Seniors Card from any Australian State or Territory is eligible for FREE Adelaide Metro public transport between 9.01am and 3pm weekdays and all day on weekends and public holidays. Simply visit an [Adelaide Metro Info Centre](#), show your interstate Seniors Card and you will be issued with a temporary metroticket which will be valid for a maximum of 14 days.)

JUST A THOUGHT

A good time to retire is before it's too late to have a good time.

Best wishes everyone,
David T.



Confucius Says

Confucius Say: It's OK to let a fool kiss you; but don't let a kiss fool you.

Confucius Say: A kiss is just shopping upstairs for downstairs merchandise.

Confucius Say: A drunken man's words are a sober man's thoughts.

Confucius Say: Sex is like a bank account. You put it in, you take it out, and you lose interest.

Confucius Say: Viagra is like Disneyland ...A one-hour wait for a 2-minute ride.

Confucius Say: A joke is like sex. Neither is any good if you don't get it.



(Thanks to David T.)



Q Life Teleweb Project Information

Keeping our LGBTI Communities Connected is a partnership project of LGBTI telephone services to deliver a nationwide service using communication technologies to enhance the health and wellbeing of LGBTI people.

Project Background

The National LGBTI Health Alliance (“the Alliance”) is the national peak body of organisations and individuals working together to improve the health and wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans/transgender, intersex and other sexuality, sex and gender diverse (LGBTI) people. The Alliance is a not-for-profit public company limited by guarantee.

In collaborative initiative with the five state-based phone counselling services, the Alliance has been funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing to develop a nationwide first point of contact early intervention peer support service to support LGBTI peoples. The five services are:

- Gay and Lesbian Welfare Association Queensland
- Gay and Lesbian Community Services of WA
- Gay and Lesbian Counselling Service Group Inc. SA
- Gay and Lesbian Switchboard (Vic.) Inc.; and
- Twenty 10, which incorporates GLCS NSW.

What the Project will do

The project will provide nationwide early intervention, peer supported telephone and web based services to support Lesbian, Gay,

Bi-sexual, Transgender and Intersex (LGBTI) people of all ages experiencing poor mental health, psychological distress, social isolation, discrimination, and/or other social determinants that impact on their health and wellbeing.

Phone information, counselling and support services are already being offered by state based services. This project will enhance and coordinate these phone services, and will extend support through web based chat and information support services. These new services and the enhanced phone support will be operational by August 2013.

How the Project will work

Strategically governed by a Steering Committee made up of representatives of the different states and other experts, each centre will enhance and extend their existing phone services provided by local volunteers so that services are available 7 days a week, 365 days a year between the hours of 5.00 pm—10.30 pm.

The phone service and web services will be supported by a small team of paid staff members who will act to fill rostering gaps and provide web based chat services. Each of the 5 state based centres will have a volunteer coordinator to facilitate volunteer engagement, professional development and maintain service standards. The national office staff will work closely with the local centres to ensure that project deliverables are being met. In WA, the Q Life Coordinator is **Nadine Toussaint**.

Strategic leadership and clinical oversight will be provided by **Ross Jacobs**, the National Q Life Clinical Director, who is responsible for enhancing the skills and capacities of state based centres and their volunteers in the provision of the services both now, and into the future. Ross will be responsible for the appropriate project usage of resources and for providing accurate and reliable information to the Steering Committee to inform best-practice decision making and service enhancement within the deliverables agreed between the National LGBTI Health Alliance and the Australian Department of Health and Ageing.

The National Q Life Clinical Director will be supported by **Tarnia Thompson**, the Capacity Building Coordinator, who will oversee resource development, community and volunteer recruitment, education and training and research requests related to the project. Tarnia will also organise and moderate the online monthly forum and be the primary presenter at community education forums and corporate information sessions. She is responsible for promotion and marketing of the Q Life Project in collaboration with the 5 state centres.

Both National Staff positions are responsible for the monitoring of an Evaluation Framework to inform funding requirements and future planning.