



February 2014

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Country Network



Australia Day
Celebrate what's great!

AUSTRALIA DAY 2014

CN SALUTES OUR VERY OWN HONOUR ROLL



Australia Day
Celebrate what's great!

David Sergeant, founder of Country Network, was acclaimed as a Community Hero at the Aids Council of NSW (ACON) Honour Awards ceremony in Sydney on 29th Sept, 2011.

The ACON Honour Awards acknowledge outstanding service to, or achievement within, the NSW's GLBTI community. The Honour Awards provide an important and unique opportunity to recognise and celebrate excellence and achievement as well as the difference that particular individuals and organisations make within our lives and community.

In autumn 1977 David established in Dubbo NSW a contact group for gay men isolated by their rural and remote locations, and also isolated by the widespread discrimination in rural community attitudes at the time. As a married gay man, with the assistance of his loving wife they created a network for gay men. This group became Country Network. Still happily married, fifty-three years later he continues to be a part of our Country Network.

The Community Hero is the premier award among the six separate award categories. There were four worthy finalist in the category. Supported by John, one of his sons, and net-

work members Max Cluff – then NSW Co-ordinator, Patron - Peter Toogood, Eddie Summerbell and friend, the ceremony was held at *The Ivy* on 29th September, 2011.

David Sergeant reflects today on the subject of his Community Hero award:-

It is worthwhile to look back because the acceptance of gays in Australia has improved so much since the 1970s. Here and in some other countries, there was a wave of acceptance of gays. By chance, Country Network caught that wave.

My wife and I moved to Dubbo, NSW, in 1976 for my work. Country Network started at an overnight Christmas party at a farm near the small town of Cudal in central NSW in 1977. Looking back at the Network's progress since then, firstly the time was right, but secondly the members were right. All through the years, there were always some members, often with their partners, who came forward, to share the leadership and the management, to keep the network moving. The strength of Country Network is the commitment of our members.

In those early years a similar group started in Western Australia and in due course both joined together. The West Aus-

tralian members made the network a national group and they brought a sense of maturity to the network. Western Australia experiences extremes of distance and climate which Country network intended to mitigate. I would like the special contribution of WA members to be always remembered.

Looking around, there is still isolation and loneliness in both country and city.

I accepted the nomination as a means of generating publicity and profile for Country Network. It was not about myself but about our association. Marcia Hines presented The Community Hero award at that time.



David receiving his award from Marcia Hines in 2011 (photo by: Ann-Marie Calilhanna)

(Cont'd on page 3...)

From the Editor

Hello Again!

Welcome to 2014. Another year has arrived to make us feel a little older and I'm told a little sillier; **that** apparently comes with age; which raises the question: *Why don't retirees mind being called seniors?* Answer: *The term comes with a 10% discount. Sometimes 15%. Or - How do you prevent sagging in old age? Just eat till the wrinkles fill out!*

A big thank you to Neil and all the Country Network Committee and helpers for a fantastic 2013. No doubt you can appreciate the amount of work that goes on behind the scenes and the stress of worrying whether the things we have organised will go to plan! Also a big thank you to John R., who assists with the Newsletter.

Bob N (QLD), our Vice-President has been canvassing members who have been awarded the Order of Australia Medal. It's very interesting as these members are high achievers in specific areas, yet we know so little about what they do or have done. Bob has done a fantastic job putting it all together. We also have a lot of talent among our members and I find other people's life journeys extremely fascinating so I think we should reinstate the Member's Profile project and hopefully learn more about each other. We would need someone to coordinate which means contacting members and sending them a form to fill out. Not a difficult task and certainly not very time consuming—SO WHO WOULD LIKE TO PUT THEIR HAND UP! (This is a line too good to resist???)

Also Bob N. was instrumental in encouraging States to have an Australia Day function. We arranged one in WA combining with the Prime Timers. There were similar celebrations in Queensland and Victoria well attended and enjoyed. Bob even contacted the Australia Day Council to use their new logo.

Although not a big user of Facebook, I see the *CN Boys at Coff's* have a great social group. If anyone would like to drop me a line sometime to let others know what is happening in their area; even if it's a sit-around- and- chat, it's always great to get together. Photos are a plus. Coffee mornings in WA, although not a big group, enjoy the monthly socialising on a Sunday morning over coffee and we seem to draw a few people not in CN who are looking for gay contact. The State of Hand-some Men also have a monthly dinner group that someone might like to tell us more about. Drop me a few lines about what you're doing.

Big Hugs - Cliff M.



Country Social Network Inc.
(Reg Y2063541)



Future Social Events Around Australia

- TAS Afternoon Tea with Grant (Date to be advised)
WA 14th February, Valentino's Pizza Night—6.00 pm, South Perth (see notice page 8)
SA 20th February, The Jetty Hotel, 6.00 pm (see notice page 12)
VIC 21st-24th February— Nude Camp Weekend (see notice page 14)
WA 23rd February, 11.46 am train from Perth U/ Ground to Mandurah, lunch at Cicerello at 1.00 pm. Afternoon tea at Lance's house. (contact Cliff on 0422 799 729)
WA Coffee morning in Perth city (see notice p.9)
QLD 15th March, Mad Hatters Tea Party, 1.00 pm, Geebung (see notice page 13)
WA 28th March-31st March, Myalup Cottages, (see notice page 10)
VIC Sunday 23rd March— Autumn Leaves Luncheon Spectacular (see notice page 14)
VIC 2014 Corroboree, Queenscliff—24th-28th April (see notice page 10)

(Please contact our Events Co-ordinator, Roger K., Drouin (VIC) on 03 5625 3687, or e-mail: rckennett@hotmail.com if you propose to have an event in your State).

Contributors to Magazine:

David T.	Neil W.	John R.	Ric S.
David S.	Ian McK	Peter T.	John R.
Michael S.	Tony C.	Bob N.	Stan
R.Barrington C.	Frank J.	Carl McK.	Ian B.
Eric V-N			

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Ian McKinley—OAM



On 12 September 2007, I was invested with the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) at Government House, Brisbane, by the then Governor of Queensland, Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC CVO. It was one of the proudest moments of my life.

The citation noted my services to Music in the fields of singing, choral work and composition, but above all, to my part in organising Music Festivals for Secondary School students at a time when Music in Queensland schools was distinctly informal. Under my leadership, several schools, both State and non-State, combined for very successful music festivals, which included full symphonic orchestras of students, playing music arranged by me, and also especially written by Australian composer Larry Sitsky. The concerts were a sensation, and demonstrated to the public at large, and in particular to the very conservative State Education Department of the time, the hunger for practical music in schools. The State responded by appointing an official Director of School Music, Mr. Kevin Siddell. It also led directly to action by parents to set up a separate organisation of Youth Orchestras, still flourishing mightily today with national and international reputations, led by the enthusiastic and gifted John Curro.

I have been asked to say what difference the award has made to me. Of course, it was given six years ago when I had long retired,

and new ideas about Music pedagogy had emerged. But at the time, the award created an awareness among discerning people of the values of Music in Education. In the present "Gonsky/Literacy/Maths" climate, it is easy to ignore the civilizing influence of the Arts.

Not least, of course, was a sense for me that all that hard work had been vindicated, and that, as a result, I was held in high esteem.

Peter Trebilco—OAM



For over fifty years Peter Trebilco has been very actively and continuously involved in voluntary community work consisting of the following:

1. Voluntary work with prison inmates, 1961- current
2. Mental Health Association New South Wales Inc and Permanent Part-Time Work Study, 1974-current
3. Australian National Association for Mental Health, 1979-1981
4. Public Health Association of Australia Inc (Formerly the Australian Association for Public Health AAPH, and then Australian and New Zealand Society for Epidemiology, Research and Community Health ANSERCH), 1974 current; a Life member from October 2007
5. The NSW Gay and Lesbian Counselling Service (Formerly CAMP NSW (Campaign Against Moral Persecution), 1969 –current; a Counsellor Emeritus and Life Member from 2004
6. National Association for Loss and Grief, 1977-1987

7. SHARE, a self-help group, 1983-1988
8. HIV/AIDS Prevention and Community Development, 1981-1988
9. The Australian Association for Experiential Education, 1980-86
10. Australian Bioethics Association, 1994- current
11. Australian Association for Professional and Applied Ethics, 1994- 2005

Peter Trebilco reflects today on the subject of his OAM award 8th May, 2004:-

“I gave up full-time work on 29 February 1988, and became even more involved with CAMP NSW which had become The Gay Counselling Service, then the Gay and Lesbian Counselling Service, then GLCS and is now a part of Twenty10. The 2 men who sponsored my being entered into membership of the Order of Australia, were the initiators of Phone-a Friend, which developed into Gayline, and is now Gay and Lesbian Line/QLife. The picture is from the official launch of QLife which is Australia wide, but the employees are in Sydney and I think Sydney has the greater number of volunteers. Only SA is a little unsteady and the NT has no core from which to draw volunteer phone workers. I also still work with ACON, the Mental Health Association NSW and have been made a Life Member of the Public Health Association of Australia. I was also presented with a lovely certificate from the NSW Attorney General for 50 years as a JP.

Being a volunteer with so many organisations for the last 50 or so years, has always been thoroughly worthwhile, mainly because one is able to give as much time and energy as one has to give.

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John Rix— OAM

CN Life Member John Rix of BERRI SA was shocked and honoured to have been awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in the Queen's Birthday Honour List of 2013.

John was recognised for his service to the Riverland community after decades of involvement with various community groups and organisations including the Rotary Club of Berri and the Berri Cottage Homes Inc.

Some of John's community work was with a Not For Profit,

Community, retirement village in Berri. John provides pro bono service to this organisation as its Treasurer and Management Committee member. "This is my 23rd year of service there", he said. "When I joined it was a village of about 40 units, whereas now it is a village of 86 units and is at full capacity.

Over the last 28 years John also has been heavily involved with the Rotary Club of Berri holding positions of President, Secretary and Treasurer at various times. "My service has had some real impact within the local, national and international community. Our club too, hosts an Australia Day Breakfast as well as other events. On the international front our club has worked on a project providing an entire village in India with drinking water".

John has served Country Network as our Treasurer for over 8

years and some will remember our robust discussions at Committee and Annual meetings. John's other community work was with a local Rostrum Club providing meeting chairmen for various groups that needed help and debating adjudication services. John also assisted with the Tax Help programme several years ago being a Tax Help programme coordinator.

John Rix reflects today on the subject of his OAM award:-

"A lot of people have helped me through my life so I want to put something back into the community. I find in country areas, volunteers are really valuable. I have certainly had great support from friends, clients and various people I have met over the years. I was shocked and honoured to receive the OAM award".

A Dinky-Die Ocker Barbie in Brizzie

The evening of Aussie Day, Ian McK and Bob N hosted a rip snorter of a party at which eight CNSEQ debutantes (footy speak) were welcomed into the ranks of "The State of Beauteous Bronzed Budgies"! The party was at Coorparoo, Brizzie, in Ian's gaily-decorated courtyard where Australian flags jostled with Chinese lanterns that also sported the Ozzie flag design, all "Made in China" of course!

Our bonza bunch of beaut new blokes, looked pretty spiffy spunks in the setting sun: Graham from the Sunshine Coast, Vince and Noel from Brisbane and, from the Gold Coast, John and Dennis, Don, Phillip and Allan.

Soon our gracious hosts emerged from the kitchen with beaded brows, bearing a large platter of home made paté and croutons. There were puzzled looks on some – was this Aussie Day or Froggy Day?! Who cares said one, it might not be real bush tucker, but it tastes bloody good grub! Bog in urged another, and they all descended on it like a swarm of dunny budgies (blowies)!! Our hosts then cooked up a storm on the outdoor barbie, turning out red wine marinated juicy steaks and snags with classic ratatouille, accompanied by an exotic range of salads (incorporating, of course, our own Queensland mango!). Your correspondents noted there was no "fairy bread"! Such an oversight!! An iconic Aussie desert, oops dessert, followed – "Peters Drumstick's", presented on an elegant silver salver. Drumstick, a Down Under delight since 1963.

It's long been recognised that Brizzie is the cosmopolitan culinary capital of Oz! Name a true blue, ridgy-didge creation that takes the cake and is exported to the world? No Aussie Day feast would be complete without this quintessential, deadset, fair dinkum gastronomic treat of Queensland origin! Wait for it! Luscious lo-cal Lamingtons filled with cream!! All thanks to Lord Lamington, Governor of (where else but) Queensland, 1896 – 1901. Created and named after him by his French chef at Gov. House, Armand Galland. This explained the Froggy flavor in our hosts menu choice for this Oz day bash. As a patriotic and thoughtful added touch, our hosts had decorated each lamington with a small Aussie flag stuck on a tooth-pick. One could pretend to wave the flag, whilst daintily dislodging a gob full of desiccated coconut stuck under ones falsies.

As the twilight deepened, booze flowed and the yabber prospered, transforming strangers into mates! Not even a sudden shower of rain could dampen our spirits as it sent us scampering indoors for a cosier chit-chat over mugs of coffee.

It was a corker of a party!

(Reporters:- Malcolm McW. (Toowong) & Bob N. (Paradise Waters)



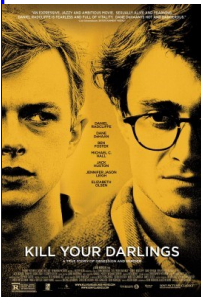
ONE CHANCE

Paul Potts, an amateur tenor, won the first series of “Britain’s Got Talent” in 2007. This biopic shows how he overcame bullying, shyness and lack of confidence to realise his dream of stardom. He was encouraged by his mother during his childhood and, later on, by his wife. His father, a mental-health worker, could not understand his son’s ambition; he wanted Paul to follow in his footsteps.

I think this is a superb movie—there are some moving scenes, laughs, lovely shots of Venice, beautiful opera arias.

I was moved by Pott’s story.

KILL YOUR DARLINGS



This is a story of the early days of three American literary celebrities—Jack Kerouac, William Burroughs and Allen Ginsberg. This film deals with a sinister and little known episode in their lives, culminating in a murder.

Ginsberg (then only 18) meets Lucien Carr at Columbia University in 1944 and there is an immediate attraction between them. Carr’s previous lover is overcome with jealousy and cannot take “no” for an answer. Matters proceed down a tragic course to a sad climax.

There are some spirited moments. For example, the group liberate banned books from the University Library and put them on display in the main reading room open at the “best” bits. There is a very explicit sex scene involving Ginsberg and Carr.

Ginsberg is played by Daniel Radcliffe who, in my opinion, is emerging from the shadow of “Harry Potter” with distinction.

THE SPECTACULAR NOW

A story of teenage love and, in particular, that of Sutter Keely—a high school senior, a charmer, the “life of the party” and one who lives for the moment. He meets and falls in love, unexpectedly, with Aimee Fineky, a quiet girl who dreams of the future.

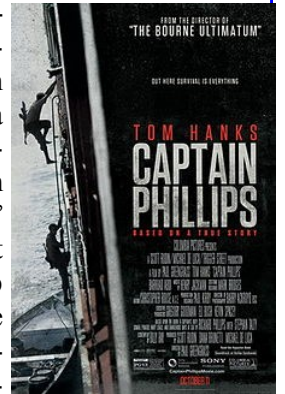
I enjoyed this movie. It illustrates the uncertainties that beset most teenagers (of any era) and dispenses with the usual scenes that prevail in the “teen” films, e.g. *The Prom Dance*; *The Gilded Cage* (subtitled)

This French film has been enormously successful and has won several awards. It is the story of a hard-working married couple whose long held dream of

returning to their homeland (Portugal) comes true only to be secretly undermined by relatives and friends. The movie is a mixture of laughs and emotion. It is written and directed by Ruben Alves who is the son of Portuguese immigrants and grew up in Paris—it is a charming story. I enjoyed it very much.

CAPTAIN PHILLIPS

Based on a true story, it covers the hijacking of a US container ship by Somali pirates in 2009, and at the same time is a very exciting thriller. The movie is tense—with action which kept me on the edge of my seat” for a lot of the running time. It also focuses on the relationship which develops between the Captain (Phillips) of the container ship and his Somali counterpart.



Phillips is played by Tom Hanks (excellent as usual) and the movie is directed by Paul Greengrass (Director of “The Bourne Ultimatum”).

NIGHT TRAIN TO LISBON

The movie is based on the novel of the same name by Pierre Mercer. Raimund Gregarious, a teacher of Latin in Bern, Switzerland, saves a woman from an attempted suicide bid, who then disappears leaving behind her coat. In it he discovers a book by a Portuguese Doctor called Amadeu de Prado and a train ticket to Lisbon. He spontaneously decides to use the ticket and sets off for the Portuguese capital. He reads the book and decides to look for the author when he arrives in Lisbon. What then follows is a mystery beset with political intrigue set largely in the years of the brutal dictatorship of Dr. Salazar.

The film has an international cast headed by Jeremy Irons and Tom Courtenay.

PHILOMENA

This is the true story of a woman who became pregnant as a single teenager in Ireland in 1952. She was sent by her family to a convent to be looked after as a “fallen woman”. The regime there was harsh and the Nuns generally were lacking in any sort of compassion. In due course, her son (Anthony) was born and subsequently was taken away from her and adopted by an American couple.

(See over page...

(Contd. From page 3)

While Philomena secretly searched for her son for decades she finally, after 50 years, is in contact with a journalist, Martin Sixsmith. The movie deals with their joint search for Anthony: I found the movie very moving and it also contains some funny moments. It is based on a book by Martin Sixsmith who is played by Steve Coogan. Judi Dench plays Philomena and the movie is directed by Stephen Frears ("The Queen").

THE RAILWAY MAN

Actually a true story. Eric Lomax becomes a prisoner-of-war when the Japanese forces overrun Singapore and he is sent to work on the notorious death railway in Thailand. He witnesses terrible suffering and frightful brutality. He builds a secret radio to get news of what is happening on the European war-front and good news from there brings hope to many prisoners. When the radio is found, he faces beatings and unimaginable torture.



When the war is over he returns home but is so traumatised by his experiences that he cuts himself off from the world. The movie then deals with how he comes to terms with the past and how he brings himself to forgive one of his principal tormentors

I have read the book on which the movie is based (written by Eric Lomax himself) and the movie sticks fairly close to the book. It is a moving story of heroism and humanity. The film stars Colin Firth and Nicole Kidman. While it is harrowing in parts, I strongly recommend it.

THE HOBBIT: THE DESOLATION OF SMAUG



Second in the trilogy, this Hobbit movie is based on the book by Tolkien. The dwarves Bilbo and Gandalf have escaped the Misty Mountain; Bilbo has found a ring with magical powers and they are all continuing their journey to get the dwarves' gold back from the dragon, Smaug.

The combination of Tolkien's imagination, Peter Jackson's direction, good acting and wonderful special effects made this, for me, an exciting movie experience. Don't worry

if you can't quite follow the plot (I have not read the book) - just sit back and enjoy the spectacle.

AUGUST: OSAGE COUNTY

A black comedy-drama based on the play of the same name and the script was written by the playwright—I saw the play some years ago.

Sisters Barbara and Karen Weston return home when their father goes missing—subsequently he is found drowned and suicide is strongly suspected. Another sister, Ivy, has stayed at home with her mother Violet, who has mouth cancer and has become addicted to pills. This is a very dysfunctional family and Violet is a monstrous character. The action takes place over a few days and the enmity between Violet and her daughters comes to the fore with sad consequences.

The dialogue is riveting, the drama is wonderful and the acting - particularly by Meryl Streep as Violet, Julia Roberts as Barbara and Ewan McGregor as the latter's husband - is superb. The movie has already been nominated for some awards and is almost certain to appear on the Oscar list.

SAVING MR. BANKS

P.L. Travers, the author of the "Mary Poppins" books was reluctant to have her heroine brought to the screen and for two decades resisted all the efforts of Walt Disney to buy the rights to her books. By 1961 the books had stopped selling, money became short and the author was finally forced to consider Disney's proposals—she travelled to L.A. to meet him.

The movie deals with the efforts of Disney scriptwriters and songwriters to get the author's approval to what they have in mind. The movie threads Travers' tragic childhood memories through flashback but this does not disrupt the present day.

A certain amount of sentimentality, not surprisingly, creeps into the film but it is funny, musical and Travers sparring with Disney and his team seems authentic.

Tom Hanks and Emma Thompson star. *A Footnote:* P.L. Travers was Australian and it was rumoured that she was attracted to both women and men!

THE SECRET LIFE OF WALTER MITTY

This is based on the short story of the same name by the American author James Thurber. Walter Mitty is a put-upon character who retreats into day dreams frequently. The movie is set around a series of events which show Walter becoming more assertive and "getting the girl" in the end.

The story was previously filmed in 1947 with Danny Kaye. While I can't recall details, I would be surprised if I didn't see the movie as I was a great fan of the star—indeed I saw him on stage in person on one occasion.

I seem to recall reading that the 1947 film was more a vehicle to display Kaye's talent as a comedian than anything else. While I haven't read the story, I suspect that the star's (Ben Stiller) portrayal here is more true to the character as drawn by the author, than Kaye's. Nevertheless I found this movie tedious and boring.

—o0o—

JANUARY/FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER INPUT

Please note the next Newsletter is due to be issued on 22nd March so I would appreciate your input to me by 15th March.

Subsequent Newsletters will be issued approximately every 6 weeks as has been happening over the last 12 months. To make it more uniform the CUT-OFF dates for **2014** will be:

<u>INPUT BY</u>	<u>NEWSLETTER ISSUED</u>
1st February	8th Feb
15th March	22nd March
1st May	8th May
15th June	22nd June
1st August	8th August
15th September	22nd September
1st November	8th November
15th December	22nd December

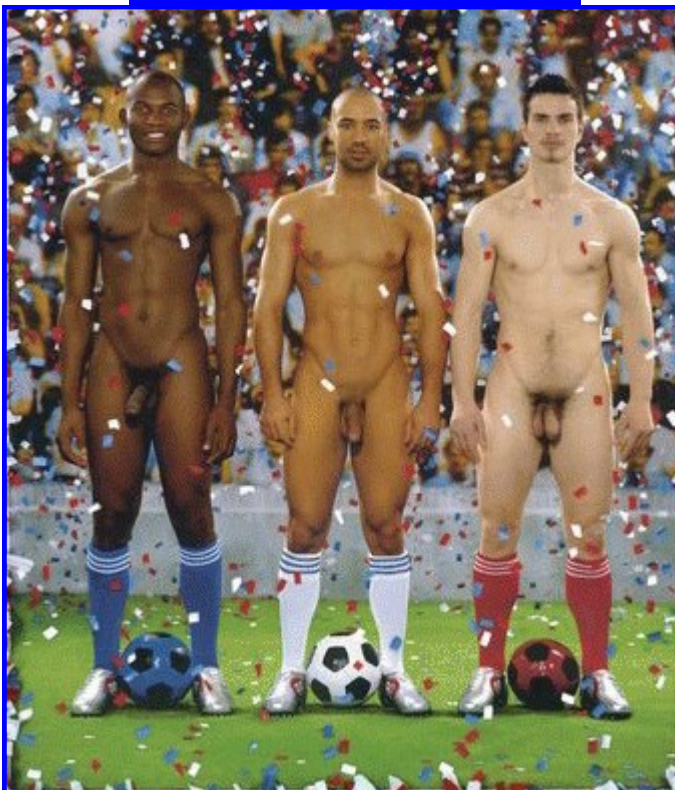
Corroboree Name Change - any suggestions?

The name "corroboree" was applied to the mid-year meeting several years ago. It has served its purpose and it is now time for a name change given that enough members are a little uncomfortable with its use.

The original intent was to suggest the weekend had a little more excitement than just a "mid-year meeting". So we are seeking any suggestions from the membership that suitably describe the weekend and can also be publicly advertised.

Please send any suggestions to the Secretary, Michael B. at :
secretary@countrynetwork.com.au or
Mob: 0433 502 106

THE COLOUR OF LIFE



Above: A work from the Musee d'Orsay Exhibition Masculine/Masculine currently showing in Paris. This one from Pierre et Gilles who can take up to three weeks to assemble an image, part collage and part photography. Such beautiful art should be shared! (Courtesy of WA Prime Timers Newsletter)

NEWS FROM TASSIE

On Sunday morning 8th December, 11 Tasmanian Country Network members celebrated the festive season together.

We enjoyed a beautiful brunch from 10am through to midday at The Mount Nelson Signal Station Brasserie.

The venue is gay operated and Scott put us out on the semi enclosed veranda area which has spectacular views of the Derwent River right down to the Estuary and all the eastern shore areas. Our tables were somewhat cramped as they were heavily booked but everyone enjoyed the food and coffee. It was great to catch up and thank you to everyone who attended.

Our next function planned for 2014 will be afternoon tea at Grant's fabulous historic home in the Glebe, date to be advised and can't wait to taste his home made scones.

Best wishes for the New Year to all Country Network members—From all the Tassie Guys.

(Apologies from the Editor: Because of my rush to finish the Christmas Newsletter, I missed the input by our Tassie friends—it's great to hear from them).

FOR SALE:

**GAY DVDs - 8 for \$75.00—Contact
Barrington C.—Melbourne 03 9360 7070**

Report from the State of Handsome Men

Happy and healthy New Year from The State of Handsome and fatter men. Many are fatter from eating too much over the Festive Season while others got a fat many times during the festive season. Thanks to Tony for replacing me by doing the last report.

Unfortunately we lost member Owen Ellison recently who passed away after a brief illness. Our condolences and thoughts are with his partner Ken.

The Australia Day pool party in Frank Di M's glorious backyard was a resounding success. He arranged perfect weather with sunny skies and 27 degrees.

About 35 beautiful bodies attended, most of them on full display in the pool.

2 days after the pool party on a hot day about a dozen ventured to the Village Green hotel for lunch. A week later was the Geelong CN dinner. About 26 attended. The next day 4 of us went to the pretty village of Queenscliff where our April gathering will be held. Neil had arranged that we have lunch in a particular restaurant. Of course it was closed. So we lunched overlooking the marina.

I have just returned from a pleasant dinner at the Darnum hotel to the west of Melbourne. Our Latrobe Valley members and their partners, friends and F***buddies attended. thanks to Roger who organised it.

In February we have the nude camping weekend at Philip T's property at Meredith. I believe the weekend

should appeal to those members who like to be without clothes. As a fashion conscious person I may not attend. Philip is a vet who treats horses...and donkeys or those who have features of a donkey.

We welcome all new members especially the Victorians - Bob, Doug W., Nathan, Geoff C., Lachlan R., Gary D., Harold A., John M., Gerry and Glen B.

January and February Birthday Greetings to Kym S, Philip T,



Robert H, David H, Kevin H, Graeme M, Ric P, Jeffrey S, Tony C, Frank Di M, Vaughan H, and Doug W.

(by Frank J.)

SNIPPETS FROM A CRUISE:

On 20 November Ted J. and I left Sydney on the *Celebrity Millennium* for a 17 day cruise bound for Singapore. The *Celebrity Millennium* is a ship that I would NOT recommend. On the 2nd day my cabin disappeared - lost or stolen. In the evening I went to my cabin number 3023 on the 3rd deck and it was gone. The odd numbered cabins are on 1 side of the ship. I passed numbers 3017,3019,3021 and no 3023 - gone. Being quite distressed I approached a gorgeous crew member (I think he had a gorgeous member too) and he searched with me. He also was unable to locate the cabin. I thought "where am I going to sleep tonight? Maybe in his cabin with him. Could be worse." He suggested we go to Customer Relations. Maybe someone had found the cabin and handed it in. We were served by the ugly woman rather than the handsome man who looked up my file. She said "you are in cabin 3123" I found that cabin and surprisingly all my belongings were in there. They must have been moved from 3023 before it **disappeared!**

2 days before we reached Darwin a

sign was stuck on the door of a cabin 3 down from ours which read "in isolation". A guard was seated outside the cabin (not the same one) until we reached Darwin to make sure the person did not escape. We assumed that the person inside had some horrible contagious disease which if spread throughout the ship could cause everyone to go mad and then hurl themselves overboard. Before we reached Darwin our cabin boy, the delicious Jimmy, informed us of the facts as he knew of them. A couple (I will call them Rhett and Vivienne) occupied a luxury suite on Deck 9. A disagreement occurred. Rhett was annoyed so he punched Vivienne. Blood was let. Screams were heard. As a result Vivienne was transferred to Deck 3 in isolation and under guard, so Rhett would not know her whereabouts. Rhett was also put in isolation under guard in the luxury suite. Upon arriving in Darwin, both were seen leaving the ship - she in an ambulance and he in a paddy wagon on the way to Fannie Bay jail.

On departing Singapore at the wonderful Changi airport, Ted and I arrived at Gate F5 for our departure. Upon scanning my hand luggage, security

discovered a 120ml bottle of Contact Lens solution. The man said I could **not** take it on the plane as the bottle exceeded the 100ml allowed for fluid (even then though the bottle was a little more than half full.) I explained that I needed it on the flight. I opened the bottle and poured some drops in my eye. I said "see, my face has not blown up". That did not help. So I did what a good drama queen should. I started to cry hysterically, sobbing that I am very stressed and could end up with a heart attack. Ted said later that I overdid the performance. The supervisor was then called. He suggested that I go to the chemist about 400 metres away and buy 3 small empty containers and then pour the contents of the bottle into them. By this time the plane was beginning to load. I explained to the supervisor that by going to the chemist, I would miss my plane. He replied that he would hold the plane till I returned. Hold up a plane of 300 people over a small bottle of Contact Lens solution. So off I went to the chemist. I had not gone 50 metres when the supervisor came running after me. He said, " I will let you take the bottle on board, but only this time! Have a nice day".

(by Frank Jackson)



Valentine's Pizza Evening-Friday 14th February-WA

6.00 pm—on the most Eastern end of the South Perth Esplanade. Members arriving by ferry, simply alight, walk down the jetty and head to their left for 400 metres. (Do not stop or speak to strange men!) Watch for Pete & Graham's motor home with the pink balloons flying. We will order Pizzas around 7.00 pm. It will be BYO drinks, nibbles, chairs or rugs. This should be a simple fun night so feel free to bring friends. Hope to see you. Any questions—please call Carl on 0409 375 359 or 9300 6014

President's Message

Last newsletter I put out the challenge to all members to help build our network by way of each member inviting a friend to join. So thank you to those 11% who have already done this and, by doing so, we have already welcomed 27 new members since the beginning of the new year ... and counting. The real exciting fact is when the other 89% meet the challenge we will have made a significant leap forward in bridging some of the many gaps in our networking. This will allow us to offer greater social opportunities to more gay men all over the country. Keep up the good work.

As one member of the team who processes these new applications, I am always fascinated by the "interests" of our new members. I wonder if other members read these and take the initiative to welcome those new members and chat about their shared interests. Our new members have included, among others, such things as:- Classic cars, Public transport, Horse racing, Bridge (cards), Lawn bowls, Tennis, Architecture, Cinema, Sound recording and last but not least, Chooks. I know plenty of existing members who share some of the above interests. This provides an ideal opportunity to make contact and help strengthen those ties that bind this organisation. So please, I encourage all members to have a look through all the different interests listed and don't be shy about contacting a fellow member who shares an interest with yourself.

With an increase in membership numbers and participation, it is important for the organisation to maintain our high standards to ensure our focus remains on quality over quantity. This is a good time for all members, not just those new to our Country Network family, to have a read of our protocols and ensure our core values are maintained. (*The Protocols* document can be downloaded from the website, or ask the Secretary for a copy) We all know of organisations who have deviated slightly off track and consequently met their demise. It can happen very quickly. We do have something pretty special in Country Network so we need to keep working to ensure our standards remain very high. Again, keep up the good work.

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

Neil



WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS



We hope you will enjoy meeting some of our members. Please 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!

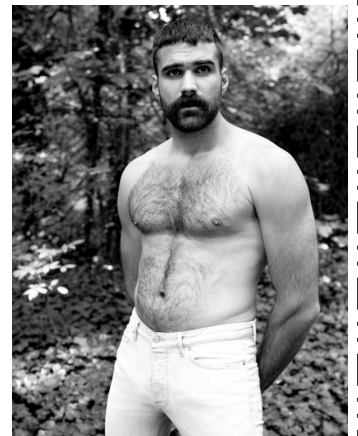
Colin D.— SA	Lachlan R.—VIC	Ray C. - QLD
Max W.— SA	Harold A. — VIC	Gary K - QLD
Barry C.— SA	Vince — QLD	Phillip H. - SA
Doug W.—VIC	Noel W. — QLD	John M. - SA
Geoff C.—VIC	John P. — QLD	John M. - VIC
Gary D.— VIC	Dennis H. —QLD	Gerry - VIC
Nathan— VIC	Graham H.—QLD	Glen B. - VIC
Allan R— QLD	Yai S.— QLD	
Phillip B— QLD	George A.— NSW	
Don P-H—QLD	Eric C.— NSW	



NEXT COFFEE MORNING IN PERTH CITY IS SUNDAY, 2ND MARCH

The gathering around the coffee pot will be as usual—the first Sunday of the month (2nd March) at Bocelli's Espresso, Forrest Place (at the base of the escalator) in the Murray Street Mall. Meet at 10.30 am.

What could be nicer than discussing the beauties of youth over a good cup of coffee?



[call Cliff on 0422 799 729 if you have any queries! - oops misspelling]



Country Network

Foreshore

2014 Queenscliff Four Day ~~Foreplay~~ Frolic



Whitehall Guesthouse

11 Learmonth St, Queenscliff

Thursday April 24th - Monday April 28th

Queenscliff bookings are coming along well with 65% of the accommodation already booked. So there is still room at the guesthouse, but you are advised to get your booking in as soon as you can, lest you be met with the “no vacancy” sign at the door.

Trips to Sorrento on the ferry, heritage walk of Queenscliff; Queenscliff Fort tour, picnics in the park and fine-dining at local restaurants are just some of the highlights of the extra-long weekend.

One member more than most is looking forward to Queenscliff; John P from Canberra. Along with his booking, he wrote, *“Every Holiday was spent in my youth at Queenscliff. We had a holiday house next to my grandparents 107 Hesse St. There were many guest houses including Whitehall with guests coming down from Melbourne in the paddle steamer Weeroona.”. Trains also arrived from Ballarat. My Grandfather born Queenscliff 1866 could tell us good stories of the early days. The Aboriginals told my great grandfather that Port Phillip bay drained out through swan bay to Barwon Heads. During a heavy storm the water broke through the narrow strip of land now the heads. The Aboriginals used to meet and corroboree in a paddock where Scots church now stands. Captain Dean's wife of the Melbourne Steamship Co. used to feed them. The story of the pirate Bonito: In 1821 his ship was boarded by a British man-o-war as Bonito left Port Phillip Bay after hiding the so called Lost Loot of Lima.” He was given a drumhead trial and hanged. According to legend the Captain’s cut of Bonito’s treasure, valued at over \$300 million today, is still hidden somewhere on or around Queenscliff. regards John”*

So I am sure as John reminisces his many happy times in this beautiful seaside port, the rest of us may be off treasure hunting armed with our buckets and spades. But to quell your excitement and to save you the time and effort, it is most likely that if any member is to find The Lost Loot of Lima, it is likely to be a State of Hand-some Men member as we have bigger spades! And no ... the town was not named after our Editor, “Queen Cliff”. Ahhhh, we have some wags in CN.

Thanks to John for his story and I’m sure a few more stories will be in the making come the long weekend in April. Contact Neil at ecosh@bigpond.net.au or (03)59682268 if you have any questions regarding this weekend.



MYALUP PINES COTTAGES—WA



Come away with us and escape the rat race!

Beautiful timber cottages in the bush and not far from the beach

Friday 28th March—Monday 31st March, 2014

It will only cost you \$25 per night per person, plus food.

On Forestry Road—only 5kms off the Old Coast Road and 12 kms west of Harvey. (Bring sheets, blanket, towel, pillow slip)

Have 2 houses booked with 16 beds (2 double beds and 12 single beds and no bunk beds)

Only about 160 km south of Perth so those interested **please ring Ric from Esperance on (08) 90712338**. Get in early and contact Ric—it’ll be a GREAT WEEKEND (like all the others!!)

Area Co-ordinator's Report—WA

I guess most members know by now that I am the new Area Co-ordinator for Perth. Pete B. will continue as Co-ordinator for the South West. Thanks to Pete and Graham for all the work they have done and the help they have given me so far.

The Australia Day party at Cliff and Richard's home was a great event with around 32 guests in attendance. Lots of great food, far too much as usual. Thanks to Cliff and Richard for making their home available for this event. What great members we have.

We have some great events organised for the next few months. Make sure you check the notices in this newsletter and note them on your calen-

dar. If you require any further information or have any suggestions for events, please give me a call on 9300 6014.

Some upcoming events are a "Red Carpet" movie evening at the **PRINCESS THEATRE MEDINA** on 17th May and a "Champagne Afternoon Tea" on 25th May. More details next month.

Organisation for the AGM in Perth on the 24th to 27th October are well underway thanks to Ted S. and Viv L. We are also looking at organising a round trip from Perth to Bunbury, via Albany, Esperance and Kalgoorlie—after the AGM, departing Perth on Tuesday 28th October and returning Perth 4th November. Graham and Pete are working on this at the moment so keep it in mind if you are coming to Perth for the AGM. More information available soon.

I have had a lot of enquiries about the Bali Escape but not a lot of actual bookings, so please let me know if you want to book. A deposit is required by the 17th March. Please note I will be in Borneo from 27th February, returning 9th March, if you wish to contact me.

Make sure you view the message board on a regular basis and keep in contact with other members.

Birthday Greetings to:

February

9 Victor P.
20 Graham S.
23 David E.



March

17 John S.
(The Birthday Boys born at the end of March will show in the next Newsletter)

- Carl McKenzie

THE AUSTRALIA DAY CELEBRATIONS - WA STYLE



Area Co-ordinator's Report—SA

WELCOME

To our new members: Maxwell W. of Largs Bay, Colin D. of Osborne, Phillip H. of Parafield Gardens, Barry C. of Clearview and Johnnie B. of Tea Tree Gully. Great to have you aboard guys; trust you will meet many of our members, as the year goes by. We are all looking forward to the (Queens-cliff Foreshore Frolic) in April which will be a real hoot!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Keith V. of Brompton on 16/2, Ken of Riverland on the 20/2 and lastly not forgetting Robert M. of Marlston on the 26/3. Best wishes and I hope that all you wish for, will come true.



ADELAIDE ALIVE

January was certainly alive! - with the opening of the new Victoria Square, which co-ordinated with the "Santos Tour Down Under" cycle race. Channel 9 had a very good coverage and no doubt some of you would have seen all the activity that went on. If you did miss it, check out the web if you can. We South Aussies are very proud of all the fine entertainment that we are now well known for.

The next main event will be "The Garden of Unearthly Delights" - 13/2 to 16/3 in Rundle Park East Terrace, Adelaide. If you should be interested in visiting, go to it on the web, for the full programme. This will be closely followed by WOMADELAIDE....the world's festival, 7-10th March. The web has also the full details of the happening in our fair city.

A WAY TO KEEP A HEALTHY LEVEL OF INSANITY

Pick up a box of condoms at a pharmacy, go to the counter, and ask where the fitting room is!

REMEMBER BACK 50 YEARS AGO (1964)

Feb 10th - HMAS Melbourne collided with HMAS Voyager cutting it in half and killing 82 of the Voyager's crew. It was the worst peace time disaster in Australia's history.

June 14th Mandela is sentenced to life in prison.

June 21st Beatles arrive in Australia.

September 28th - Harpo Marx, the silent one died.

Oct 15th - Khrushchev was deposed while on holiday.

Oct 24th - OLYMPIC Games were held in Tokyo.

NEW YEAR RESOLUTION

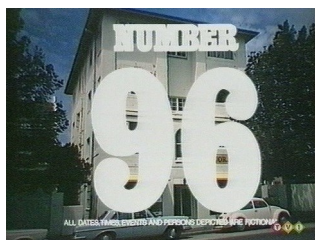
I guess we all thought about it but naturally did nothing. So what about sharing your love by asking a friend to join "Country Network" a gift from you, that can last for a whole 12 months or even more !

MANPOWER MUSCLES IN THE LOCAL MARKET

I saw this article in our local paper! Clear your diary girls,..... their tour begins at the Bridgeport Hotel (where we had a great CN dinner, before the AGM last year. Sorry guys the show wasn't on then); Village Hotel, Salisbury Tavern, Victoria Hotel and the Norwood Hotel. Well no mention of boys diaries ????

CN NEWSLETTER ARCHIVE - 2/1995

"The night Australia lost it's virginity". On the 13th March 1972 , NUMBER 96 was a world first in a number of ways-it was a soapie to run five nights a week in prime time; it was the first to explore such themes as homosexuality, rape in marriage, and teenage drug use. After the co-producer heard that the writer wanted to include Camp (Gay was not in common use then) characters, he allegedly okayed it but added "homosexuality without device". When the series opened, Don (the gay character) was sharing a flat with straight man Bruce. Joe Hasham who played the role of



Don, said he was not worried about playing a homosexual be-

cause Don was not 'camp' (in the present sense of the word). He was "like most of my homosexual friends , very straight-looking and his sex life was his own business". However, as the series progressed, Don's sexuality became public and Joe Hasham (Don) got fan mail from all types ' - from daughters offering themselves-and some from sons also from the mums sometimes offering themselves and some from fathers saying, "Yeah, well maybe we could get together sometime."

Dudley Butterfield's character came into Number 96 in the first year, and Dudley and Don had a long relationship. Dudley was a stereotype homosexual -high camp, a chef in a wine bar, and 'loved old movies'. When Don discovered that Dudley was bi, they split up, but the public did not like it. Older women sometimes stoped Chard Hayward (who played Dudley) in the street, asking when he was going to get back with "that nice young Don". When other countries heard that an Australian soap was rating 50 (unequalled here), they wanted it, even though it was in black and white. That is, they wanted it until they saw it was far too explicit for the US network TV and soon had to be withdrawn in Canada after many complaints.

JOHN THOMPSON—DECEASED

An ex-SA member who moved to WA passed away recently in Perth. John suffered poor health for some time.

SOCIAL EVENT

Come and join us for the first SA event of this year!

THURSDAY 20th February

6.00 pm Dinner at

THE JETTY HOTEL,

28 Jetty Road, Glenelg

Bring a friend and meet another

à la carte plus salad bar

main courses from \$12.00 .

For any queries ring David T.

on (08) 8242 3432

JUST A THOUGHT

Money can't buy happiness - that's why we have credit cards !
Best wishes to all - David T.



THE QUEEN SUMMONS YOU TO ATTEND: The Mad Hatters Tea Party



To be held at 1.00 pm, 25 Sollis Street, Geebung (Qld)
Saturday, 15th March for Afternoon Tea—BYO Drinks

\$10.00 entry fee—Proceeds to go to Internet Gay Activist Group—allout.org.

RSVP: by Monday 10th March to Eric on 0438 388 005

or eric.von@live.com

Prize for Maddest Hat



Notes from Ian B.—Warburton VIC BROOCE'S NON-BIRTHDAY PARTY—NOVEMBER 2013

This annual celebration nearly didn't eventuate as we found our much loved *Master of Witt*, a shadow of his true self due to a severe bug he picked up on his recent trip. Arriving at No. 99, after being picked up at the renovated Geelong Station, by the now crowned Queen of the South and guest Eric from SA, I enjoyed seeing the canvas blinds—so sensible, practical and romantic—a touch of Somerset Maugham.

Food excellent; Mushroom Pikelets my favourite and the chocolate balls—WOW

(come to Queenscliff, chef, whoever you are).

Our comradeship proved yet again that CN is the club to be in. On return to Melbourne with Phillip another 10/10. Looking forward to the Meredith trip this year for my first frolic swim.

WA

I'm excited about visiting WA this year for the AGM as I have never been there. Taking the Indian Pacific train and cheap flight home; hoping to see the wild flowers and the Kimberley area.

TRAVEL—2014

I'm looking for a travel companion for a cruise on the *Ocean Princess*—leaving

Athens on 14th September 2014, and visiting Croatian ports, Malta, Sorrento etc.—Balcony \$4,479 or outside cabins \$3,779, for 14 days.

Please phone me on (03) 5966 2339 for details.

Below are the travel plans I have for 2014/2015 and would love someone to share with me:

1. Meredith Weekend (Feb):
2. Mid-year at Queenscliff (April):
3. WA trip for AGM (October):
4. Cruise Sydney/NZ November. If you are interested, please contact me as deposits need to be paid soon.

Website Update

Although achieving a borderline pass mark for doing an adequate job, our website still provides its share of frustrations. Most will not be aware of the nearly hundred emails that bounced back in December due to a fault with our server. Poor Eak was flooded with returned emails. Finally Image Smith (our server) was able to correct the problem. However, we since discovered that anyone with a "Yahoo" email address is now only getting, "Dear Bill," and nothing else. This is a consequential error from the December problems and Image Smith is working to rectify the error.

Our website was already archaic when it was first rolled out. O.K. we didn't have great knowledge of such things. In recent years we've tweaked the site to take better advantage of

the things it can do for us. These changes are mainly behind the scenes and greatly assist in administration. We know our shop-front window, (what the public sees) is limited on sex appeal. But because of the archaic programming, Eak's hands are pretty well tied on how much pizzazz he can add to our site. It's not a simple case of building a new website either, despite this appearing quite easy with today's programming and software. It's the development of all the administration programming that makes the task either expensive or extremely time-consuming.

Most major additions that are on our wish list, such as a photo gallery for members, will be implemented by way of a 3rd party provider similar in the way we included The Message Board. So the website archaic state is

irrelevant for additional add-ons. However, the biggest problem with these add-ons, like The Message Board, is their compatibility with the various members' browsers and operating systems. We need to know if you're having any problems accessing any aspect of our website, because if you have a problem, there's a good chance someone else is also having the same problem. We don't know about it unless you tell us. So please, if you have any access issues please email Eak at webmaster@countrynetwork.com.au

And last but not least, please check your junk mail for any CN emails. We won't take it personally but if you do find CN emails in your junk, please change your settings and list us as "friendly".

A Loved Victorian Dies



Earlier this year Country Network lost another valued friend with the passing away of Owen from Victoria. Owen, with partner Ken, joined Country Network three years ago and in that time, made many friends with his simple, loving nature. Owen's smile had a way that would quickly have all around smiling with him. Owen was the perfect example why Victorians claim to be the State of Handsome Men. He will be greatly missed. Our condolences to his partner Ken.

Social Media

Are you a member (financial or not) of another social media website?

If so, how about including a message on that site to let others know you're also a member of Country Network. A simple message along the lines of

"I'm also a member of Country Network, a very worthwhile social network organisation that promotes contact and friendship among gay men right across the country. It provides gay men with greater social opportunities and camaraderie, especially for those men who feel they are outside of, or do not relate to, the mainstream gay social scene."

You just never know who reads these profiles.

Social events

With our significant increase in membership numbers it is important that all regions provide some sort of regular social opportunities for members to get together. Not all social events have to be gala affairs. They can be simply meeting up for a light lunch then the movies, or similar. The important aspect is simply providing an opportunity for members to gather in the one place and enjoy conversation. Don't just rely on your area coordinator to do all the work. Please feel free to discuss with him any idea you may have. Then ... don't forget to advise Roger, our Events Coordinator, at events@countrynetwork.com.au and he can help spread the word.

New Perth Area-Coordinator

It is with great pleasure we welcome Carl M as our new Area Coordinator for Perth. As most in Perth will already be aware, Carl brings a lot of experience and enthusiasm to the role, so hold on to your hats. Thanks to Pete for his time and effort in the role previously. Pete now has more time to concentrate on travelling and keeping Sturkey happy. Of course, Pete will continue in the role of Area-Coordinator for the South and look after those members in his region.

Membership List

With the influx of many new additions, members are reminded to keep their contact details up-to-date. Don't risk causing any embarrassment to you or others by using outdated contact information.

Postage members will receive their next membership list with the next newsletter edition.



CN Victoria—The State of Handsome Men—invites you to

Friday Feb 21 - Monday Feb 24, 2014

Private farm in Meredith

No sex, No clothes; just a relaxing weekend back to nature.

Numbers are strictly limited—Contact Phil on 0413 274 723 or balliang@yahoo.com

The State of Handsome Men invites you to Mal and Neil's House in The Hills



autumn leaves luncheon spectacular



- ◆ **When?** Sunday, March 23, 2014 at High Noon to Late Afternoon
- ◆ **Where?** 24 Pinnocks Rd, Emerald
- ◆ **Why?** To Feast with Old Friends and New Friends and visit The Man Cave
- ◆ **What?** Gourmet luncheon in true Mrs. Bucket style. BYO drinks
- ◆ **Who?** You and gaggles of other handsome, butch men

RSVP (essential) by March 18 on (03)59682268 or ecosh@bigpond.net.au