

## Editorial

Dear Friends

Thankyou for your participation in the World AIDS Day commemoration at the Medlow Bath Memorial Park on Sunday last.

The theme of Resilience and Renewal was popular with the 40ish attendees. A sausage and a glass of something cool added to the day.

It seems that our work rebuilding the memorial has struck a chord with our community. As well as attracting visitors from beyond the mountains, including representatives of ACON and PWHA. Cr Suzie Van Opdorp represented the BMCC.

Our Annual Christmas Dinner will be held at the Chalet on 10 December 2024. That is next Tuesday.

The Chalet is a comfortable and evocative venue which lends itself to function such as our Christmas festivities. Now is the time to make your reservation.

I would like you wish all our members and friends a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and I'll see you next year for more merriment.

Terry

## Upcoming Events

### Christmas Dinner

The Chalet, Medlow Bath

7PM Tuesday, 10 December 2024

Price: \$43

Prepay by Direct Deposit. Card/Cash at event.

Reservations by the Sunday evening prior to [3sisters.bookings@gmail.com](mailto:3sisters.bookings@gmail.com)

### Luncheon

The Grandview Hotel, Wentworth Falls  
12:30PM Tuesday 28 January 2025

Price: \$42

Prepay by Direct Deposit. Card/Cash at event.

Reservations by the Sunday evening prior to [3sisters.bookings@gmail.com](mailto:3sisters.bookings@gmail.com)

### Payment Methods

Prepay BSB 633 000, account number 193 701 778. Reference your surname.

Card/Cash accepted at the event. Reservations are still required.

### Three Sisters Social Group Inc

[www.threesisterssocial.asn.au](http://www.threesisterssocial.asn.au)

[3sisters.sg@gmail.com](mailto:3sisters.sg@gmail.com)

PO Box 7074 Leura NSW 2780

Committee Executive:

President: Terence Preeo

Vice-president: Vacant

Secretary: Larry Singer

Treasurer: Rick Hawthorne

# Merry Christmas and Happy New Year



**The Three Sisters Social Group Wishes you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year**

## Three Sisters Annual Christmas Dinner

PHONE: KAT. 568  
PROP.: J. R. W. KING

**The Chalet**  
MEDLOW BATH

BLUE MOUNTAINS, W.2  
N.S.W.

That's what I call Christmas

**Three Sisters Christmas Dinner**  
**10 December 2024**  
**The Chalet**  
**Medlow Bath**  
**\$43**

**Reservations**  
[3sisters.bookings@gmail.com](mailto:3sisters.bookings@gmail.com)



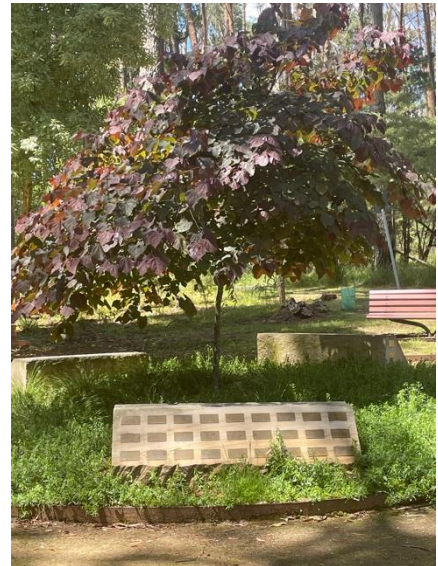
# World Aids Day Medlow Bath Park

World AIDS Day was held on Sunday 1 December 2024 at the AIDS Memorial in Medlow Bath Park.

The drenching rain of the week gave way to a pleasant dry sunny day enjoyed by about 40 people.

Angelo Laios, ACON's Regional Community Health Promotion Officer, Nepean Blue Mountains, John Rule, Senior Research Manager, National Association of People with HIV Australia and Cr Suzie Van Oporp, BMCC, represented their organisations.

The memorial was a fitting backdrop to an address the given by the President of Three Sisters Social Group, Terence Preeo. Terry's speech the theme for this year's commemoration was Resilience and Renewal, a retrospective of the LGBTIQ communities' journey since the AIDS epidemic's peak. A copy of the speech follows.



A sausage sizzle, a salad or two and more than a few wines was gladly consumed by the appreciative crowd.

## World AIDS Day

**1 December 2024**

**Medlow Bath Park**

### ***"Resilience and Renewal"***

*Welcome.*

*It is 2 years since we were last here at beautiful Medlow Bath Memorial Park to dedicate the rebuilt Blue Mountains AIDS Memorial.*

*Since then, the Memorial has settled nicely into its surroundings and serves an important role in the community fabric of the mountains.*

*On World AIDS Day 2 years ago, our attention was on the past and, rightly so.*

*But then is not now.*

*A lot has happened in the intervening period between the epidemic and today.*

*We have faced our demons and largely made accommodation with them.*

*At least that's what I tell myself. My role in rebuilding this memorial uncovered quite a few demons, some of which I didn't know I had.*

*I guess we will never be totally free of our histories. It is part of us. It contributes to who we are.*



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*AIDS cast a long shadow over our community. Out of the loss came a determination to best our demons and come out of it stronger.*

*Thus the theme of today's event,*

### **Resilience and Renewal**

#### **Resilience**

*Resilience was the response to the tragedy of the AIDS epidemic— resilience to keep fighting, to demand attention, to push for treatments, and to fight against the societal prejudices that exacerbated the crisis.*

*Australia's response to HIV and AIDS wasn't just about healthcare — it was a human rights movement. Activists and advocates pushed for prevention education, for accessible treatment, and for an end to the shame and stigma surrounding HIV. They fought not just for a cure, but for dignity, equality, and respect. The community mobilised and declared that it would not be silenced.*

#### **Renewal**

*Our community faced great challenges in the wake of the AIDS crisis. But we survived and emerged stronger. The AIDS epidemic changed the course of LGBTIQ+ culture, healthcare and identity.*

*We used the crisis as a catalyst for renewal.*

#### **Stronger Community**

*One of the most powerful aspects of the LGBTIQ+ community's renewal after the AIDS crisis was the deepening of community solidarity.*

*Organisation such as the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation and ACON provided lifeline to those living with HIV. They built lasting structures of support that would continue to serve the community to this day.*

*The establishment of memorials, such as our memorial, and other rituals of remembrance, provided a cultural framework for the community.*

*The fight for HIV treatment became central to the LGBTIQ+ community's post-AIDS renewal. The demand for life-saving medications and HIV education led to major breakthroughs in both healthcare and public health policy.*

*The gay community made significant strides in visibility and legitimacy. We have talented artists, writers, musicians, and actors who enrich our cultural landscape. We have dedicated professionals who excel in medicine, law, education, and business. We have LGBTIQ tradies, military personnel, bus drivers, in fact we are everywhere, just as we always have but we now a recognised part of the wider society.*

#### **LGBTIQ Rights**

*The AIDS epidemic acted as a catalyst for a broader fight for LGBTIQ+ rights, social acceptance and equity.*

*This included the decriminalisation of homosexuality (in the last Australian states by 1997), anti-discrimination laws protecting people living with HIV, and the eventual legalisation of same-sex marriage in Australia in 2017.*



More recently we saw the passing of the Equality Legislation Amendment (LGBTIQA+) Act in NSW strengthen the Discrimination legislation for LGBTIQ persons.

### **Cultural Renewal**

Generally cultural events saw renewal of LGBTIQ+ pride. For example, Sydney's Mardi Gras, evolved into powerful symbols of resilience and unity.

Our own Mountain Ball and Disco were the Mountains contribution.

### **Finally**

The LGBTIQ+ community in Australia emerged from the AIDS crisis not only with resilience but a stronger, more united community.

A community that valued mutual care, advocacy, and collective action.

Those years reshaped Australia's response to HIV, made medical advancements accessible, and secured greater rights for LGBTIQ+ people.

The resilience and renewal of the LGBTIQ+ community after the AIDS crisis was about transforming tragedy into hope.

### **The Future**

As to the future, things may be looking a little dark in some parts of the world. The community's hard-won rights are facing the prospect of cancellation.

The bullies of this world are doing what they always do, punch down on the most vulnerable; that is, our trans kids and any one identifying as a T in LGBTIQ community.

If they are successful, the other letters to be next. Let us hope that the resilience we had during the AIDS era will see us through.

As someone prominent in history once said, "The Price of Liberty is Eternal Vigilance".





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# Happy Snaps Luncheon November 2024



# A Soiree Called Wallis





