

1984

A chronology of LGBTIQ+ communities and movements in Sydney from 1969 to 2018

Updated on 5/10/2019

Date	Location (if not Sydney)	Event	Reference
January 1984		The Gays Counselling Service receives Government funding for the position of a Director.	RF
January 1984		The Sydney AIDS Prospective Study is established by St Vincents Hospital to study a wide range of men over a period of time to identify the history of the AIDS virus infection, how to prevent an infection and how to halt the progression to end stage AIDS once the infection occurs.	SSO 60
January 1984		A gay man is refused accreditation as a counsellor for Life-Line because he is homosexual.	S 5/13
January 1984		The Australian Teachers' Federation approve a resolution giving increased rights to gay and lesbian teachers.	S 5/13
January 1984		A collection of short stories, <i>If Blood Should Stain the Lino</i> by Gary Dunne is published.	S 5/14
1 January 1984	NT	The Criminal Code is amended to legalise private homosexual acts, with an age of consent of 18, in contrast to 16 for heterosexual sex.	RF
12 January 1984		Australia's first registered gay Club – The Newtown Businessman's Club at 16 Albermarle Street, Newtown opens.	S 5/4
18 January 1984		Friends of the Anti-Discrimination Board (ADB) meet with the ADB and it was agreed to publicise the functions of the Board.	S 5/14
20 January 1984		Members of inVersions and Gaywaves present a discussion on gay writing as part of the 7 th Marxist Summer School.	S 5/13
28 January 1984		Brian McGahen, Sleaze Ball director and Craig Neil of SLATS present the <i>Australia Day Warehouse Party</i> at the corner of Jones and Fig Streets, Ultimo.	S 5/13
29 January 1984		The Boomerang Social Club holds its inaugural <i>Bush Picnic</i> at the St Ives Showground.	OWN 82
February 1984		The Anglican Church is taken to the Equal Opportunity Tribunal over its refusal to allow use of Sydney Square for the start of the Gay Mardi Gras. The Church backs down.	RF
February 1984		Richard Turner and Dennis Altman announce they will make a half hour documentary film of the Gay Mardi Gras.	S 5/15



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February 1984		The first issue of the <i>East Sydneysider</i> is distributed around Darlinghurst and West Paddington.	S 5/16
2 February 1984		The Croydon Hotel at 13 Hennessy Street, Croydon advertises Saturdays as a gay night.	OWN 83
11 February 1984		A group of protesters dressed in conservative drag gather outside the Willoughby Town Hall and greet Festival of Light members gathering to launch Jim Cameron's election campaign.	OWN 84
20 February 1984		The Reverend Troy Perry, founder of The Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches, visits Sydney.	S 5/14
21 February 1984		The President of the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board, Carmel Niland, denounces the retention of those sections of the Crimes Act outlawing sexual relations between consenting adults.	S 5/16
22 February 1984		Barry Cecchini presents <i>Luna Park for Adults</i> at Luna Park.	S 5/13
23 February 1984		The northern rivers based Mandala group presents <i>Slipshod Cabaret</i> at the Gay Centre.	S 5/15
25 February 1984		The 7 th Gay Mardi Gras is held and its theme is <i>We'll Dance If We Want To</i> . It is launched by the Reverend Troy Perry and over 40 floats take part. 9,000 people dance and party until after 10am the next day.	RF S 5/13 OWN 85
25 February 1984		For the first time, police co-operate fully with the Mardi Gras Committee by closing the parade route to traffic.	OWN 85
March 1984		<i>On Guard: a girls' own adventure</i> – a film by Digby Duncan, Sarah Gibson and Susan Lambert is screened at the Academy Twin, Paddington.	S 5/16
March 1984		Toby Zoates's film <i>The Thief of Sydney</i> screens at the Academy Twin.	S 5/17
March 1984		Licensee Barry Cecchini enters into a partnership with Roger Edwards and Lionel Muller and buys the freehold on the Beresford Hotel.	OWN 87
March 1984	Melbourne	Gayzette a newsletter of the "mixed gay movement" is launched and sent to all registrants of the 9 th National Conference of Lesbians and Homosexual Men.	SGN 1



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11 March 1984		Premier Wran and Police Minister Anderson announce the setting up of the Community Relations Bureau, including a Police-Gay Liaison Unit.	RF
11 March 1984		Almost 3,000 attend the International Women's Day March from the Town Hall to Hyde Park.	OWN 86
17 March 1984	US	The Reverend Don Johnson dies in Birmingham from cancer aged 62.	S 5/19
24 March 1984		The Wran Government is re-elected.	MM
31 March 1984		A discussion group for women interested in or practising S/M meets at 37 Cavendish Street, Stanmore.	OWN 87
April 1984		Twenty Ten announces Department of Youth and Community Services funding of \$56,000 to set up a gay youth refuge.	S 5/19
April 1984		The Gay Rights Lobby sends a booklet <i>Homosexual Law Reform: Questions and Answers</i> written by Craig Johnston to newly elected members of the NSW parliament.	S 5/20
April 1984	San Francisco	A proposal to close sex-on-premises venues in San Francisco splits the gay community.	S 5/21
April 1984		Researchers reported in Sydney Gay News have discovered a virus responsible for AIDS – "a leukaemia type virus from the retro virus family", which attacks "T-4 lymphocytes of the Gamma globulin the portion of the blood carrying the antibodies".	SGN 1
4 April 1984		The male toilet block in Green Park is demolished. The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence retrieve a collection of "relics".	S 5/19 S 6/4
6 April 1984		Premier Wran is jeered at the Council for Civil Liberties 21 st Anniversary Dinner, because of his failure to introduce homosexual law reform.	RF
6 April 1984		The Pink Patrol, a non-violent group aiming to prevent homophobic assaults in Oxford Street advertises in <i>The Star</i> .	S 5/19
14 April 1984		Three openly gay men are elected to the City of Sydney Council – Craig Johnston, Brian McGahen and Bill Hunt.	RF
14 April 1984		Out lesbian, Margaret Lyons is elected to the Leichhardt Council.	RF
20 April 1984		Westower Tavern, Parramatta, advertises a gay disco on Tuesday nights.	S 5/20

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20 April 1984		The Sheraton Motor Hotel, 40 Macleay Street, Potts Point, promotes itself as a gay friendly venue in <i>The Star</i> .	S 5/20
21 April 1984		Brian McGahen and Shane Mangan organise <i>Bop Till Ya Drop</i> at the Roundhouse UNSW to a jointly fund Brian McGahen's election campaign and a Gays Community Services Centre.	S 5/18
22 April 1984		The third Annual Gala Debutante Ball is held at the Hilton Hotel. Actor, Pat McDonald is the special guest and receives the debutantes.	S 5/14
27 April 1984		The first issue of <i>Sydney Gay News</i> is published. The editor is Alan Deith.	SGN 1
28 April 1984		The Boomerangs Social Club present <i>Cell Block</i> and raise \$700 for the Lambda Legal Defence Fund.	S 5/20 S 5/21
29 April 1984		Premier Wran announces that he will introduce a private member's Bill to decriminalise homosexual acts.	RF
May 1984		Crossways, a self help group for gay and lesbian ex-psychiatric patients meets on Saturdays.	S 5/23
May 1984	Canberra	The Federal Government grants \$80,000 toward a joint Sydney/Melbourne medical team to research AIDS at Fairfield Infectious Diseases Hospital (V) and Sydney's St Vincent's Hospital.	S 5/23
May 1984		Leggs nightclub part-owned and managed by KLIPHE opens at 23 Pelican Street, Oxford Square, Darlinghurst.	SGN 5
May 1984		Trilogy Restaurant opens in the former Martins Club, 217 Oxford Street, Darlinghurst.	SGN 7
1 May 1984		Formation of Ad Hoc Law Reform Group (AHLRG) which neither supports or opposes the Wran Bill and lobbies for equal ages of consent.	MM
2 May 1984		Gay community representatives meet with the ALP left.	MM
6 May 1984		A gay community meeting is held on full equality for homosexuals.	MM
8 May 1984		Twenty-Ten adopts a full equality position on homosexual law reform.	MM
10 May 1984		A AHLRG meeting supports the Wran Bill.	MM

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Date	Location (if not Sydney)	Event	Reference
10 May 1984		The NSW Premier Wran introduces a Private Member's Bill to decriminalise male homosexual acts. He meets with a delegation that morning. He refuses to lower the age of consent from 18 to 16 or agree to a "reasonable grounds of belief" clause but agrees to Lex Watson's suggestion that no person between the age of 16 – 18 will be prosecuted without the consent of the Attorney-General.	RF
12 May 1984		Oxford Street is leafleted with two leaflets – one with the official AHLRG position and the other urging the withdrawal of the Bill.	MM
13 May 1984		An AIDS benefit at the Midnight Shift raises \$6,035.	S 5/22
15 May 1984		A gay community rally is held at Parliament House.	MM
15 May 1984		The Festival of Light holds a rally in Macquarie Street.	MM
15 May 1984		Debate on homosexual law reform is held in the Legislative Assembly.	MM
16 May 1984		The amended Wran Bill is passed by the Legislative Assembly.	MM
17 May 1984		Homosexual law reform is debated and the Wran Bill passed by the Legislative Council.	MM
18 May 1984		The Wran Bill is returned to the Legislative Assembly for final approval. The NSW Buggery Law is reformed and the male/male age of consent is set at 18.	MM
18 May 1984		Michael Glynn retires as editor of <i>The Star</i> and is replaced by Paul Smith.	S 5/19
27 May 1984		The Homosexual Law Reform Coalition proposes to set up a phone tree network to provide emergency support for people arrested.	SGN 4
29 May 1984		The Gay Immigration Task Force is formed.	MM
30 May 1984		Peter Tully and David McDiarmid hold a point exhibition at The Roslyn Oxley Gallery, Paddington.	S 5/23
June 1984	New York	Terry Goulden, director of the Gays Counselling Service attends the First International Gay/Lesbian Health Conference.	S 5/23
June 1984		The Sydney City Council passes a motion calling on the State Parliament to give gay men equality before the law.	S 5/24

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June 1984		The National Greg Weir Campaign winds up and its funds distributed.	S 5/25
June 1984		The Gays Counselling Service meets with Sydney western suburbs groups at Guildford to form Westreach.	S 6/2
June 1984		A group within the Metropolitan Community Church decides to look at a US 'buddy' system in which people are trained to care for people with AIDS. Later in 1984 the group sets itself up as the Community Support Network (CSN).	S 6/12
June 1984		The Gays Counselling Service of NSW is again refused tax deductibility for donations because it is not deemed to be a "public benevolent institution".	SGN 4
5 June 1984		The Attorney General Paul Landa tells a delegation he is pressing ahead with the dropping of all charges against men arrested in the Club 80 raids.	S 5/24
5-6 June 1984		The first Australian Conference on Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) is held at Sydney University. One workshop is entitled <i>Is Affirmative Action Appropriate for Homosexuals?</i> and it discusses the implications of homosexuals being excluded from Part IXA EEO of the NSW Anti-Discrimination Act.	S 5/24
6 June 1984		The legislation decriminalising male homosexual behaviour is proclaimed and will commence on the 8 June 1984.	MM
8 June 1984		Rose's, a cabaret venue opens in the old Goulburn Club building, 51 Goulburn Street, City.	S 5/24 SGM 4
13 June 1984	Canberra	Federal Parliament passes the Public Service Reform Act which contains protection for homosexuals in Federal employment.	RF
15 June 1984	Canberra	The Federal Health Minister, Dr Neal Blewett announces \$110,000 for research in Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide into AIDS.	S 5/24
17 June 1984		Don's Bar, at corner of Bayswater Road and Ward Avenue, Kings Cross opens.	S 5/25
18 June 1984		Bob Goldsmith, Australia's big winner at the first gay Olympics in San Francisco, dies from illnesses resulting from AIDS, aged 30.	S 5/25 SGN 5

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Date	Location (if not Sydney)	Event	Reference
23 June 1984		A march and rally for lesbian and gay liberation is organised by the Gay Solidarity Group and endorsed by the HLRC.	MM
23 June 1984		This year's Stonewall Rally for Lesbian and Gay Liberation attracts 100 people. It assembles at Town Hall Square and marches to Hyde Park.	S 5/24
24 June 1984		Gay City Broadcasters begin their transmissions by announcing <i>A Gay Sunday Morning</i> on Radio Sydney 2RSR – FM (88.9 MHz)	SGN 5
27 June 1984		<i>The Darlinghurst Review of Unnatural Acts</i> is held at the Gay Centre, Surry Hills.	S 5/24
July 1984	Canberra	The federal Minister for Immigration and Ethnic Affairs, Stuart West, says that immigration guidelines governing de facto relationships will not be relaxed to include homosexuals.	S 6/2
July 1984		The AIDS benefit fund establishes a legal trust organisation to raise funds for assisting people affected by AIDS and related issues. It is called the <i>Bobby Goldsmith Foundation for AIDS and Related Issues</i> .	S 6/2
July 1984	London	Drew Griffiths a founder of the Gay Sweatshop Theatre Company is murdered.	S 6/2
July 1984		The White Horse Hotel at 161 Princes Hwy, St Peters promotes itself as a gay venue.	SGN 7
6 July 1984		A group protests outside the Newtown Hotel against a fundraiser to help send an Australian Police team to the World Police Olympics.	S 6/1
8 July 1984	Cote d'Azur	Photographer Brassai dies aged 84.	S 6/3
9 July 1984		The Chairman (sic) of the Board of Directors of Radio Eastern Sydney orders <i>The Gay Program</i> off the air for one month after allegations it was "offensive" and "discriminated against Roman Catholics".	S 6/2
13 July 1984		<i>Exposivo</i> a group art exhibition of seven artists (David Adams, Peter Blakeney, Philip Juster, Kerrie Leishman, Bill Morley, Carol Murphy, Asko Sutmen) opens at 370 Pitt Street, City.	S 6/2 SGN 7
22 July 1984		Jeffrey Saynor, a member of the Gay Solidarity Group is detained and abused at Darlinghurst Police Station as an 'intoxicated person' despite being 'stone cold sober'.	S 6/2

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27 July 1984	Speers Point	Police seize three paintings and later charge Melbourne artist, Juan Davila and Director of Lake Macquarie Gallery, Laura McLeod, under the NSW Indecent Publications and Classified Articles Act.	S 6/3
28-29 July 1984		A training workshop for the Gay Crisis Network (aka the telephone tree <i>see 27 May 1984</i>) takes place at Darlinghurst CYSS.	SGN 7
August 1984		Several hundred people gather outside Sydney Town Hall to hear a performance by Oral Richards and the Sisters of the Order of Perpetual Indulgence while Mary Whitehouse addresses an audience in the Town Hall.	S 6/3
August 1984		The ADB announces it has successfully resolved its first homosexual related case for a man alleging he was dismissed as a salesman because he was homosexual.	S 6/4
August 1984	Melbourne	Councillor Ralph McLean is elected Mayor of Fitzroy Municipal Council. He is Australia's first openly gay mayor.	S 6/4
August 1984		The Sydney City Council consents to the Midnight Shift operating 24 hours, seven days a week.	VV 9
1 August 1984		A Liquor Law Inquiry into the Liquor Act and whether it should be amended to allow for discos and other situations where liquor is provided without a meal, commences.	S 5/24
3 August 1984	National	The Australian Broadcasting Corporation announces that gay couples will be treated on the same basis as heterosexual 'de facto' couples in regard to special benefits, leave, etc	RF
4 August 1984		The NSW Minister for Youth and Community Services, Frank Walker officially opens the Twenty Ten Refuge in Glebe.	S 6/3
6 August 1984		An AIDS information and support group meets Monday evenings at the Oxford Hotel.	S 6/3
18 August 1984		Kitchen staff for Ward 7 St Vincents Hospital fail to deliver meals to four patients with AIDS related illnesses. The hospital's administration take steps to resolve care issues for its AIDS patients.	S 6/4
18 August 1984		A charity supper show at a screening of <i>A Woman in Flames</i> for the Gay Counselling Service is held at the Academy Twin Cinema.	S 6/3

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Date	Location (if not Sydney)	Event	Reference
21 August 1984		A Bobby Goldsmith Foundation (BGF) benefit night is held at Kinselas featuring Simone and Monique's Playgirls Revue and raises \$2,000.	S 6/3 S 6/4
25 August 1984		A community fund raising party <i>Face the Music and Dance</i> is held at the Paddington Town Hall.	S 6/3
31 August 1984 – 2 September 1984		<i>Common Ground</i> , the Tenth National Conference for Lesbians and Homosexual Men is held at QLD University. A workshop on paedophilia is dropped after pressure from the QLD National Party Government.	S 6/5
September 1984		The chief judge of the NSW Equity Court rules in a property dispute between two women who had a "homosexual form of marriage", giving half share of the property to each party.	S 6/5
September 1984		Gay City Broadcasters on 2RSR-FM (88.9) begins a series of programmes on Sunday afternoon about Sydney's gay past.	S 6/5
September 1984		The Minister for Youth and Community Services, Frank Walker, withdraws \$20,000 funding from the Gays Counselling Service after hearing it was "backing the Australian Pedophile (sic) Support Group."	S 6/6
26 September 1984		An ADB – gay consultation meeting discusses setting up a police-gay liaison unit.	S 6/6
October 1984	San Francisco	14 gay bathhouses ordered to close by the Public Health Director re-open on the advice of gay civil rights lawyers. The closure is also condemned by the Bay Area Physicians for Human Rights.	S 6/9
October 1984		The NSW Ombudsman, G.G. Masterman launches an investigation into the Club 80 raids.	S 6/9
5 October 1984		The Sydney City Council is the first local government body in NSW to adopt a firm policy of support for equal opportunity in employment.	S 6/8
6 October 1984		The annual Sleaze Ball is held at the Hordern Pavilion.	S 6/6
10 October 1984		Gay youth activist David Cook and his supporters win control of the management committee of Twenty – Ten.	S 6/8
14 October 1984		A community meeting is held at the Gay Centre to discuss the formation of a police-gay liaison unit. Five gay representatives are elected.	S 6/7 S 6/8

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Date	Location (if not Sydney)	Event	Reference
18 October 1984		The Paddington Green Hotel is opened as a gay venue by Kandy Johnson, Simone and Wayne.	S 6/7
24 October 1984		A public meeting at 26 Norton Street, Surry Hills, forms an association which will serve the sporting interests of the gay community of Sydney with particular reference to Gay Games II.	S 6/9
November 1984		A study of the effectiveness of condoms is started by Julian Gold, Dr John Gerofi, Dr Basil Donovan and Lex Watson.	S 6/10
November 1984		The Midnight Shift's application for a hotel licence is delayed after a number of Darlinghurst Hotels force the case to be heard before the Liquor Licencing Court.	S 6/11
2 November 1984		William Yang holds a retrospective exhibition of his work at the Hogarth Galleries.	S 6/9
4 November 1984		The 10 th annual Polly-lympics picnic and sports day is held at Macquarie University. Gay City Broadcasters do live crosses during its afternoon show.	S 6/8
8 November 1984		Jeff Lees and his lover Michael Moore, members of the Gay Railworkers' Group (GRG) are detained, harassed and abused by Railway Police.	S 6/10
17 November 1984	Melbourne	First National AIDS Conference is held and the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO) is formed	KD
18 November 1984		An AIDS summit decides to form a National Advisory Committee on AIDS (NACA) which will have 12 members, chaired by Ita Buttrose and includes two Australian AIDS Action Committee representatives.	S 6/11
23 November 1984		Fred Nile and his supporters stage media events outside the Roman Baths and 253 Steam Baths as part of its Call to Australia election campaign.	S 6/11
December 1984		William Yang publishes <i>Sydney Diary</i> .	S 6/9
1 December 1984		Gay activist, Lex Watson is the first recipient of the Gay Service Ward.	S 6/12
8 December 1984		The Boomerang Social Club holds a fund raising dance and production in aid of the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation and raises \$3,000.	S 6/10 S 6/12

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Date	Location (if not Sydney)	Event	Reference
12 December 1984		Efforts by gay groups to save gay prisoner Allan Dean from deportation fail in the Federal Court.	S 6/14
15 December 1984		The AIDS Learning Exchange, an information resource for people wanting to know more about AIDS meets at the Juanita Nielsen Centre in Woolloomooloo.	S 6/12
16 December 1984		David Beschi opens The Man venue at 30 Burton Street, Darlinghurst.	S 6.12
19 December 1984		A joint meeting of state and federal health ministers reject a series of punitive measures proposed by the Commonwealth AIDS Task Force headed by Professor David Pennington. These include the closure of gay venues and “homosexual areas” to be patrolled by the police.	S 6/14
31 December 1984		A NYE Party presented by the organisers of the 1984 Mardi Gras and Sleaze Ball parties is held at the Old Signal building in Crown Street.	S 6/13

Sources:

MM = Murray McLachlan “Appendix One: Homosexual Law Reform in NSW, Timeline of Significant Events”

KD = Ken Davis

RF = Robert French

Based partly on previous listings by:

- Craig Johnston
- Maurice Blackman, Lex Watson and Robert French
- Kendall Lovett, John Cozijn and Ken Davis

Brisbane: by Nick Ward and by Carol Low in association with the Qld Association for Healthy Communities LGBT History Project and the Museum of Brisbane’s Prejudice and Pride exhibition and with the assistance of Clive Moore

Melbourne – by Jamie Gardiner and Graham

Hobart – by Rodney Croome and the Tasmanian Gay and Lesbian Group website

Adelaide – by David Hilliard, the late John Lee, Chris Smith, Malcolm Cowan and Dino Hodge

Perth – by Neil Roberts

Northern Territory – by Dino Hodge

S = The Star

OWN = The Oxford Weekender News

SGN = Sydney Gay News

SSO = Sydney Star Observer

VV = Village Voice

