

# 1985

## 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 1985		The Mardi Gras Workshop at 49 Forbes Street, Woolloomooloo opens for the 1985 season.	S 6/15
January 1985	Brisbane	The Qld government bans a booklet from its <i>International Youth Year Kit</i> because it gives the impression there is nothing wrong with homosexuality.	S 6/16
January 1985		The federal Minister for Health, Dr Neal Blewett and prominent epidemiologist John Hirshman attack the national AIDS Task Force (ATF) report that led to press stories of 50,000 men in Sydney carrying AIDS.	S 6/16
January 1985		The Mardi Gras Committee is told that the rent on the Royal Hall of Industries venue for the Mardi Gras party has been doubled.	S 6/17
January 1985		The Triangle Basketball Club of lesbians and gay basketball players is formed.	SO 15
January 1985		The National Network of Young Lesbians and Gay Men is formed.	SO 31
4 January 1985	US	The National Gay Task Force of the US recommends that the gay community not take the HTLV-III anti-body test because it does not diagnose AIDS.	S 6/15
10 January 1985		The Sydney Gay Sports Association advertises 15 gay sports clubs and their contacts in <i>The Star</i> .	S 6/14
10 January 1985		The North Shore Voluntarians, a social group for gay men, advertises fortnightly meetings at the San Miguel Hotel, Cammeray.	S 6/14
17 January 1985		Dave Sargeant, gay journalist and activist dies aged 32.	S 6/15
18 January 1985	Guildford UK	Lord Wolfenden who headed the British Government's <i>Departmental Committee on Homosexual Offences and Prostitution</i> , dies aged 78.	S 6/16
31 January 1985		Professor Pennington head of the national AIDS Task Force (ATF) refutes reports that he had called for the cancellation of the Gay Mardi Gras. Lex Watson attacks the ATF as a "public health nightmare, out of its depth, talking way beyond any semblance or basis of competence, failing to consult or liaise".	S 6/16



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February 1985		<i>The Star</i> reports that a drug HPA 23 has been developed in France that inhibits the spread of the AIDS virus.	S 6/17
February 1985		Dr Julian Gold is appointed the director of the newly opened Albion Street Centre. The Centre provides a clinical medical service.	S 6/18
1 February 1985		A fifty-year retrospective of the paintings and drawings of Donald Friend is held at the Holdsworth Gallery, Woollahra.	S 6/16
7 February 1985		The AIDS and Related Conditions Council of NSW (ARCCON) is formally launched as the organisation that will deal with the federal government. It consists of affiliated member groups – the AIDS Counselling Service, the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation, the Community Support Network and the Gays Counselling Service.	S 6/16
9 – 26 February 1985		A cultural festival of performance, exhibitions, forums, film and sports is held in conjunction with the Gay Mardi Gras.	S 6/16
10 February 1985	Melbourne	The Australian Gay Archives (AGA) hold Melbourne's first gay history tour.	S 6/15
11 February 1985		The Bookshop Darlinghurst moves from the Link to 207 Oxford Street, Darlinghurst.	S 6/16
12 February 1985		<i>Not Quite Sixty Minutes</i> , a dinner revue, directed by Richard Turner, opens at the Midnight Shift.	S 6/16
13 February 1985		Dame Joan Slumberland (aka Judy Glenn) opens the Mardi Gras Art Exhibition at the Print Source Gallery, 82A Oxford Street.	OLM 11
15 – 28 February 1985		The AFI and the Gay Mardi Gras present the <i>Gay Film Festival</i> at the Chauvel Cinema, Paddington.	S 6/16
16 February 1985		NSW Police Minister Peter Anderson publicly supports the protection of gays from discrimination by Police.	RF
16 February 1985		Roadrunners, a gay and lesbian motorcycle club holds its first <i>Mystery Run</i> from the Beresford Hotel.	S 6/15 S 6/16
16 February 1985		<i>O Fading Fading Days</i> Mardi Gras Festival poetry reading is held at Print Source Gallery.	OLM 12
17 February 1985		The Gay Business Association Fair is held at Green Park, Darlinghurst.	S 6/15
17 February 1985		The first Sydney Gay Sports Association fun run from Centennial Park to Green Park is held.	S 6/18

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21 February 1985		Posters designed by David Judd as part of the <i>Rubba Me</i> safe sex campaign are launched by the Gays Counselling Service (GCS) and the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation (BGF) at the Man venue on Oxford Street. The NSW Health Department refuses to fund this “explicit” campaign.	S 6/15 S 6/16
22 February 1985		The inaugural Mardi Gras Swimming Carnival, organised by the Sydney Gay Sports Association and SCOG at the Boy Charlton Pool draws 300 spectators.	OLM V2/1
23 February 1985		The 8 <sup>th</sup> Gay Mardi Gras Parade is held.	RF
25 February 1985		The Sydney Morning Herald publishes a front-page article <i>AIDS victims watch as the parade goes by</i> , by Jackie Archer. The SMH admits the article contained very few facts and retracts it two days later.	S 6/18
28 February 1985		A gay pre-premier fund-raising night of <i>La Cage aux folles</i> is organised by the Knights of the Chameleons Co-ordinator, Donnie Smith.	S 6/15
March 1985		The former member for Bligh, Fred Miller, is appointed as acting Gay Community Relations Co-ordinator.	S 6/19
March 1985		The T-Cell Group is set up for people without T-cells.	S 6/19
March 1985		US AIDS experts visiting Australia say they recommend that high risk groups be routinely tested for AIDS virus anti-bodies.	S 6/19
19 March 1985		The ABC’s Four Corners program screens a full hour report on AIDS.	S 6/18
20 March 1985		The name “AIDS Council of NSW” appears in <i>The Star</i> , replacing “AIDS and Related Conditions Council of NSW”.	S 6/19
April 1985		Australia is the first country in the world to test all blood donations for HIV antibodies.	KD
April 1985		The AIDS Council (ACON) places a fresh submission for emergency housing for people with AIDS as the number of people in need rises rapidly.	S 6/21
April 1985	Newcastle	The first person in Newcastle suspected of having AIDS has had his preliminary diagnosis confirmed.	S 6/21
7 April 1985		Ratizm, another Rat’s party produced by Jac Vidgen, Bill Yip and Reno Dal, is held at the Paddington Town Hall.	S 6/19



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9 April 1985		Amendments to the <i>Human Tissues Act</i> are introduced in NSW and now require donors of blood or semen to sign a prescribed form.	S 6/21
15 April 1985		The Gay Task Force on Immigration becomes an unincorporated association.	SO 1
18 April 1985		<i>The Star's</i> last issue is published, after the owners fail to discharge the debt they owe to the previous owner, Michael Glynn.	S 6/21
21 April 1985		The Britannia Hotel at 103 Cleveland Street, Chippendale, advertises itself as a gay venue.	S 6/21
29 April 1985		The AIDS Council receives \$74,000 from the federal government for a Resource Centre and a co-ordinator.	SO 1
30 April 1985		The drag entertainer Wendy Wayne/Waine (Wayne Brannan) who had worked at Les Girls and Pete's Beat is shot dead.	SO 1
30 April 1985		A Trade Unions Working Party forms within ACON.	SO 1
May 1985		The Ankali Project, a training and support network for people providing emotional and counselling to people with AIDS, is established.	SO 2
May 1985		<i>Flaws in the Social Fabric – Homosexuals and Society in Sydney</i> , a history of the gay movement in Sydney by Denise Thompson, is published.	SO 3
2 May 1985		The first issue of <i>The Star Observer</i> is published by Gay Publications Co-operative from Melbourne. The editor is Richard Turner.	SO 1
5 May 1985		Paul Mortimer alleges that two police assaulted him at the <i>Taxi Club</i> and later at Darlinghurst Police Station and subsequently takes these allegations to the NSW Ombudsman.	SSO 63
9 May 1985		The first issue of <i>Village Voice</i> is published. The managing editor is Glenn Wells.	VV 1
10 May 1985		40 people graduate from the Community Support Network volunteer nursing program.	SO 2
14 May 1985		The owners of the Roman Baths and the KKK, Nick Lorschy and David Ross split, with Lorschy managing KKK and Ross the Roman Baths.	SO 2
29 May 1985		The Human Rights Commission recommends that the lovers of Australian citizens should be allowed to migrate to Australia.	SO 3

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30 May 1985	Newcastle	Magistrate Reason of the Newcastle Magistrate's Court, finds three works by Juan Davila exhibited at the Lake Macquarie Art Gallery in 1984, are "offensive".	SO 4
30 May 1985		The Handlebar at 80 Oxford Street (formerly Pete's Beat) a denim and leather bar, opens.	VV 3
1 June 1985		The Chair of ACON, Lex Watson, criticises the federal Minister of Health, Neal Blewett's warning of tough measures to control AIDS if educational efforts fail.	SO 4
7 June 1985		<i>The Times of Harvey Milk</i> , a film by Robert Epstein and Richard Schmiecher, screens at the Sydney Film Festival.	SO 4
9 June 1985		<i>Rat-A-Round and Square</i> , the latest Rat's party venture is held at the University of NSW Roundhouse and Square House.	SO 3
10 June 1985		The presentation of the 1985 Caps Awards is held at Patchs disco.	SO 4
10 June 1985		Graeme Donkin, a co-founder of Acceptance, the Metropolitan Community Church and the Jewish group Chutzpah, dies.	SO 7
17 June – 1 July 1985		AIDS Awareness Week – a series of workshops, information sessions, open days and a fun-run – is held.	SO 2
24 June 1985		The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence open their second national reliquary to the public above the Bookshop, Darlinghurst.	S 6/21
25 June 1985		The first AGM of the AIDS Council of NSW is held.	SO 2
30 June 1985		The Gay Task Force on Immigration holds a fund-raising cabaret evening at the Graphic Arts Club.	S 6/21
July 1985		NSW Police Choir sings at a Metropolitan Community Church (MCC) function.	RF
1-7 July 1985	Toronto, Canada	The annual International Gay Association (IGA) conference is held.	S 6/15
7 July 1985		Members of the T-Cell Group hold a "Boys' Own Bake-Off Contest" at the Oxford Hotel.	SO 3
7 July 1985		The Sydney Gay Mardi Gras Committee implements a management plan to improve its efficiency and reduce costs.	SO 6
11 July 1985		The Gay Mardi Gras Committee appoints Brian McGahen as its president, Bill Whittaker chair, Kevin Golding secretary and John Murray as treasurer.	SO 4

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11 July 1985		The Midnight Shift's application to transfer a dormant hotel licence to its premises in Oxford Street is refused by the NSW Licencing Court.	SO 6
11 July 1985	Newcastle	A discussion night on AIDS is held at the Lighthouse Coffee Shop-Sauna at 5 Union Street, City.	VV 6
14 July 1985		The annual Beresford Hotel Fete in Hill Street is held.	SO 6
14 July 1985		The Mardi Gras Committee rescind their decision to create a position of president because it is unconstitutional. The appointed president, Brian McGahen resigns from the Committee.	SO 7
18 July 1985		The Federal Health Minister, Neal Blewett addresses a Gay Rights Lobby dinner.	RF
19-21 July 1985		NSW Police-Gay Liaison Group Hotline seeks information about assaults against gays. 69 calls are received, 53 concerning assault.	RF
22 July 1985		Tony Cooper is elected president of the Gay Business Association.	SO 7
22 July 1985		The State Rail Authority alters its bereavement leave provisions, replacing the words "de-facto wife or husband" with "de-facto partner".	SO 9
23 July 1985		The first official committee of ACON is elected. Lex Watson is President, John Pattinson Secretary, David Lowe Treasurer, and Don Baxter, Gary Cox, Terry Dowd, Ross Duffin, Peter McCarthy, Adam Marriot, Terry Patterson and Gary Pye are on the Committee.	SO 8
7 August 1985		The NSW Anti-Discrimination Board (ADB) tells Ansett Airlines and TAA that their travel ban on AIDS virus anti-body positive (Ab+) people is illegal in NSW.	SO 8
7 August 1985		The NSW Anti-Discrimination Board advises people who have positive AIDS virus anti-body test results to keep them secret, following sacking of Ab+ people.	SO 8
12 August 1985		A new live revue show, <i>Acid 'n Tonic</i> – opens at the Paddington Green Hotel.	VV 7
16 August 1985		Richard Turner retires as the editor of the <i>Star Observer</i> . John Wishart is the new editor.	SO 9
16 August 1985	Newcastle	The Criterion Hotel is under new management and is undergoing refurbishment.	VV 10

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21 August 1985		The Human Rights Commission recommends that in the light of the federal Sex Discrimination Act, the ban on single people adopting is unacceptable.	SO 9
27 August 1985		Despite warnings from ACON and medical experts that new AIDS legislation will stop people taking the anti-body test, NSW Health Minister Mulock proceeds. The legislation will criminalise a person if they do not disclose their AIDS antibody positive (Ab+) status and doctors if they do not notify authorities of their Ab+ clients.	VV 9
27 August 1985		The old Newtown Rules Club opens as the Stage Club at 303 Cleveland Street, Redfern. Tommy Brown, the manager, plans to turn it into a private club, with drag shows and screening movies.	VV 9
September 1985		The Gay City Broadcasters (GCB) move its slot to Sunday 9am to midday on Radio 2RSR-FM (88.9).	SO 10
September 1985		This month's issue of <i>Audacity</i> the publication of National Action, attacks the Gay Liberation Quire and the Gay Immigration Task Force.	SO 13
September 1985		A new AIDS Hotline based at the Albion Street Clinic is now operating. Irwin Diefenthaler, co-ordinator, says the hotline will provide easy access to factual information and advice.	VV 10
3 September 1985		A drug called Ecstasy is reported in the <i>Star Observer</i> . It is now spreading from psychotherapist use to US college campuses.	SO 10
12 September 1985	Canberra	State delegates from Gay Immigration Task Forces meet with the Immigration Minister, Chris Hurford and Liberal Senator Chris Puplic and other politicians and bureaucrats. They get an undertaking that gay relationships will be treated compassionately without discrimination.	SO 11
14 September 1985		The first ACON education forum for people interested in doing work in the AIDS education area is held at the Learning Community Centre, corner William and Riley Streets.	VV 9
21 September 1985		The Knights of the Chameleon's 23 <sup>rd</sup> Annual Ball is held. The 1984 outgoing Empress of Sydney is Terry Goulden. The 1985 Empress of Sydney is Kandy Johnson.	SO 8 SSO 37



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21 September 1985		The Gays Counselling Service (GCS) holds its Sixth Annual Workshop on the Counselling Aspects of AIDS at the Sydney AIDS Clinic 150-154 Albion Street, Surry Hills.	SO 10
21 September 1985		The first formal meeting of the Sydney Gay Youth Group is held at the Gay Centre as an attempt to provide a place for young lesbians and gay men to meet and come out.	SO 11
27 August 1985		Simon Ferguson is allegedly refused surgery at the Rachel Forster hospital when he reveals he is gay. In May 1989 his claim goes to the Equal Opportunity Tribunal, but receives an unfavourable judgement.	SSO 105 SSO 116
28 August 1985		<i>Being a Prostitute: Prostitute Women and Prostitute Men</i> by Roberta Perkins and Garry Bennett is released.	SO 8
28 September 1985		<i>The Family Ball</i> , the annual costume ball is held at the Roundhouse, UNSW.	SO 7
October 1985		The Australian Dental Association (ADA) suggests dentists who are concerned about the transmission of AIDS, ask patients if they belong to a high-risk group. The ADA recommends gloves, but not necessarily a face mask.	SO 12
October 1985		The Synod of the Anglican Church adopts a report which recommends that unrepentant practising gays should be barred from every form of ministry with the church. It also seeks to remove anyone connected with the gay group AngGays, from the church and to set up a counselling service to cure homosexuals of their homosexuality.	SO 13
October 1985		The national AIDS Task Force head, Professor David Pennington gives an ambivalent welcome to news that French researchers find that cyclosporine halts the spread of the AIDS virus.	SO 14
1 October 1985		A 1,000 strong candlelight rally and vigil <i>Fighting for Our Lives</i> begins at Green Park and finishes at Parliament House with the aim to demonstrate dignity and determination to fight AIDS. It is organised by Sydney Aldermen McGahen and Johnston.	SO 11
1 October 1985		An anonymous donor gives \$1m toward the construction of a new immunology centre at St Vincents Hospital.	SO 12
2 October 1985		Sydney City Council Alderman Craig Johnston is expelled from the ALP for voting against a deal which gives the ALP and Liberal Parties, control of the Sydney City Council.	SO 12



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Date	Location (if not Sydney)	Event	Reference
2 October 1985		Actor Rock Hudson dies from a AIDS related illness.	SO 12
12 October 1985		<i>Sleaze Ball</i> is held at the Hordern Pavilion. Peter Tully, Jeff Hardy designs the look, Robert Lake designs the lighting and the DJ is Stephen Allkins.	SO 8
14 October 1985		Gay community leaders, broadcasters and journalists attack a Channel 10 AIDS documentary which includes allegations that a group of gays are deliberately infecting blood banks.	SO 13
14 October 1985		ACON opposes the growing tendency in the US and NSW to legislate to close sex-on-premises venues, arguing that these venues are an appropriate and easy way to educate clients.	SO 13
19 October 1985		The Gay Solidarity Group picket the New Zealand Tourist Centre in support of a bill to decriminalise consenting sexual activities between NZ men over 16.	SO 13 SO 14
22 October 1985	San Francisco	Dan White, the former city supervisor who in 1978 shot dead openly-gay fellow supervisor, Harvey Milk, commits suicide.	SO 14
27 October 1985		Gay City Broadcasters go to air for the last time.	SO 14
27 October 1985	San Francisco	A long-term protest commences as people with AIDS and AIDS-related conditions chain themselves to the Federal Building in United Nations Plaza. They demand greater AIDS research, the use of experimental drugs, more effective public AIDS education and the classification of AIDS related conditions to be recognised as a serious disease.	SSO 33
November 1985	Brisbane	Amendments to the <i>Liquor Act</i> introduced into Parliament bans “drug dealers, sexual perverts, deviants or child molesters” from licenced premises and makes it an offence for a licensee to allow these people on to their premises.	SO 15
November 1985		A Gallop Poll reveals 91% of Australians want people suspected of carrying the AIDS virus to undergo testing.	SO 15
November 1985		Sources in the Health Department tell the <i>Star Observer</i> that cuts in funding to the Albion Street AIDS Clinic reflect the Department’s dissatisfaction with the Clinic’s administrative capacities and some of its activities.	SO 16

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Date	Location (if not Sydney)	Event	Reference
November 1985		New instructions issued by General Sir Phillip Bennett, Chief of the Defence Forces Staff mean that defence force personnel will no longer face automatic dismissal for gay conduct.	SO 16
November 1985		Professor John Dwyer at the University of NSW tests AIDS "victims" (sic) with Interleukin – 2.	SO 17
November 1985	Montreal	Dr Luc Montagnier, the first scientist to isolate the AIDS virus states that the virus can be transmitted when saliva is exchanged when kissing.	VV 16
3 November 1985		The 11 <sup>th</sup> Poly-lympics is held at the Macquarie University Sports Oval.	SO 13
8 November 1985	Newcastle	The Equal Opportunity Tribunal awards Troy Morrison of Salt Ash damages of \$200 from the Newcastle Gallipoli Legion Club after he was refused service based on his homosexuality in February 1984.	SO 15
15 November 1985		Roger Edwards and Lionel Muller return to join Donna Asensio as managers of the Beresford Hotel.	VV 15
18 November 1985		The annual BGF Dinner is held at the Oxford Restaurant with guest of honour, Ita Buttrose.	VV 15
20 November 1985		Scamps, a western suburbs gay groups formed by Rod Wallace, holds its first evening at the Sheridan Hotel, Guildford.	SSO 57
30 November 1985		Mr Gay Sydney Grand Final and Party is held at the Paddington Town Hall.	SO 16
15-16 November 1985		The first National AIDS Conference is held.	RF
December 1985		David Steven's film, <i>The Clinic</i> screens on Channel 7 after months of wrangling with the Film Censorship Board over cuts to the film.	SO 17
December 1985	ACT	The Crimes (Amendment) Ordinance institutes an equal age of consent and removes the last punishments for homosexual sex.	RF
1 December 1985		<i>A Rats Party</i> is held at Luna Park.	VV 16
3 December 1985		The Castanet Club open a season at the Belvoir Street Theatre.	VV 16

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Date	Location (if not Sydney)	Event	Reference
5 December 1985		The NSW Labor Council passes an AIDS policy which calls for its members to be provided with clear and accurate AIDS information, protection from unfair discrimination, protection from unfair discrimination and safe working conditions.	SSO 22
6 December 1985		The 1985 Summer Swimming Carnival opens at the Domain Pool.	SO 16
7 – 8 December 1985	Newcastle	Fund-raising events to raise money for the Royal Newcastle Hospital AIDS ward are held at the Criterion Hotel and Pipers Disco.	SO 17
9 December 1985		The first meeting of the Department of Employment and Industrial Relations AIDS Working Party is held.	SO 17
10 December 1985		Professor David Pennington, the head of the National AIDS Task Force, recommends against universal testing for AIDS anti-bodies to the NSW government.	SSO 22
11 December 1985		A Bobby Goldsmith Foundation (BGF) Art fund-raising exhibition is held at 112 Oxford Street.	VV 15
14 December 1985	Lawson	The Mountaineers social group presents its Christmas Pantomime at the Lawson Community Hall.	VV 15
15 December 1985	Canberra	\$1.5 million is set aside in 1986 for AIDS research in Melbourne and Sydney by the Federal Government.	SO 18
16 December 1985		A motion to support the 1986 Mardi Gras Parade moved and seconded by Aldermen McGahen and Johnston is passed when the Liberals split from the "LibLab" coalition and support the independents.	SO 18
16 December 1985		Larry Galbraith takes up as Assistant Editor of the <i>Star Observer</i> in 1986.	SO 18
19 December 1985		The Sydney Gay Mardi Gras votes to become an incorporated body.	SSO 19
31 December 1985		The Fitness Exchange moves to its new premises at 33 Wellington Street, Chippendale. The Gays Counselling Service sublets a space for a phone room and a counselling room.	SO 18

#### Sources:

KD = Ken Davis

S = The Star

SO = The Star Observer

SSO = Sydney's Star Observer (1986)

VV = The Village Voice

OLM = Oxford Lifestyle Magazine



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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

