

1996

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

Updated on 6/10/2019

Date	Location (if not Sydney)	Event	Reference
January 1996		The first openly gay member of any Australian Parliament, NSW MLC, Paul O'Grady resigns.	SSO 284
January 1996		The Keep (formerly the Stronghold), the popular gay leather bar at the Clock Hotel in Surry Hills closes.	SSO 286
January 1996		Derek Williams and Jacqui Griffin are the new co-convenors of the Gay and Lesbian Teachers and Students' Association.	SSO 287
January 1996		The Woods Royal Commission into Corruption in the NSW Police Force hears accusations of recreational drug use and dealing among Sydney's gay and lesbian police officers, from a former Police Gay and Lesbian Liaison Officer (GLLO).	SSO 290
4 January 1996		Ronald James Handley a.k.a. Fanny Farquar dies.	SSO 284
February 1996		A lesbian teacher allegedly bashed and vilified by students at inner city Cleveland Street High School, takes her complaint to the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board (ADB).	SSO 291
February 1996		Michael Hurley's <i>A Guide to Gay and Lesbian Writing in Australia</i> is launched at the State Theatre.	SSO 291
February 1996		Tony Ayres's anthology, <i>String of Pearls, Stories About Cross-Dressing</i> , is launched at the State Theatre.	SSO 292
February 1996		Gary Burns, barman (sic) at the Gladesville Bowling and Sports Club asks the ADB to investigate his allegations that members had made anti-homosexual and AIDS jibes and the Club's management had not taken the matter seriously.	SSO 292
February 1996		SGLMG Film Festival short film awards are made to three lesbian films with prizes made possible from the bequest of the late Stephen Cummings.	SSO 292
February 1996		The Australian Gaymes is held at various Sydney locations.	SSO 292
8 February 1996		The Lesbian Space Project (LSP) purchases a building in Bedford Street Newtown.	SSO 291
11 February 1996		Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras (SGLMG) Fair Day is held.	SSO 290



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18 February 1996		Gay film maker Richard Turner screens his new movie <i>Violet's Visit</i> at a People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) and Anti-Violence Project fundraiser.	SSO 288
24 February 1996		<i>Word of Mouth IV</i> performance night is held at Sydney Park, St Peters.	SSO 292
25 February 1996		Over 100 people attend <i>Convert That Anger</i> rally at Taylor Square over increased street violence against lesbians and gay men.	SSO 292
March 1996		A new refuge for homeless gay and lesbian youth to be run by 2010, is opened in Glebe by the State Minister for Housing Craig Knowles.	SSO 293
March 1996		State Member of the Legislative Council Fred Nile announces he intends to sue participants of the Queer Collaborations float in the recent mardi gras parade which depicted him as a caged animal complete with artificial genitalia.	SSO 294
March 1996		Tourism NSW announces that the SGLMG had generated about \$40 million for Australian business.	SSO 294
March 1996		Justice James Wood announces the Royal Commission's inquiry into paedophilia.	SSO 295
March 1996		Gary Miller makes a submission to the Equal Opportunity Tribunal (EOT) claiming that he had been harassed over his sexuality in his job as a Qantas engineer.	SSO 295
March 1996		Kimberley O'Sullivan, editor of lesbian sexuality magazine, <i>Wicked Women</i> , resigns throwing its future into doubt.	SSO 295
March 1996		The Gay and Lesbian Teachers and Students (GaLTaS) group calls on private education bodies to run police checks on all teachers before they are employed.	SSO 296
March 1996		State Corrective Services Minister, Bob Debus announces that a trial of condom vending machines are now installed in some NSW prisons.	SSO 296
March 1996		Gay and lesbian groups meet to discuss strategies to counter a possible anti-gay backlash arising from the NSW Police Royal Commission inquiry into police protection of paedophiles.	SSO 297
March 1996		<i>Gay and Lesbian Perspectives III</i> is launched by Vanessa Wagner	SSO 297

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2 March 1996		A record crowd of 650,000 people turn out to watch the annual SGLMG Parade.	SSO 293
2 March 1996		A Federal Liberal Government is elected.	SSO 293
5 March 1996		The decision by the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee (PBAC) to restrict funding for new HIV treatment drugs 3TC and d4T to people with less a T cell count of 500 is attacked by AIDS organisations.	SSO 293
April 1996		Carlotta launches her new show, <i>Carlotta and Her Beautiful Boys</i> at the Eastern Suburbs Leagues Club.	SSO 299
April 1996		3TC, a new anti-viral drug manufactured by Glaxo Wellcome which promises to reduce the level of HIV in the bloodstream and boost CD4 counts when used in conjunction with AZT, is launched.	SSO 299
1 April 1996		Newtown Gym closes, leaving members out of pocket.	SSO 297
13-14 April 1996		Hosted by the Coalition of Activist Lesbians (COAL) and Playback Theatre, <i>Lesbian Rights Are Human Rights</i> forum raises current issues affecting lesbians.	SSO 299
16 April 1996		<i>Poverty Sucks</i> , a public meeting is held at Heffron Hall in Darlinghurst to figure out ways to address poverty among people living with HIV/AIDS.	SSO 299
19 April 1996		TAP Gallery forum on sexuality discrimination hears speakers, Norrie May Welby, John Fowler, James Scanlon, Bronte Morris and Jac Vidgen.	SSO 300
27 April 1996		An Extraordinary General Meeting of SGLMG votes for to 2 classes of membership, with non-homosexuals and transgenders having to provide reasons for their membership.	SSO 301
May 1996		Anonymous satirical newsletter, <i>The Daily Plague</i> , comes under legal scrutiny after accusations are levelled at former art gallery owner, Barry Stern.	SSO 302
May 1996		AIDS Council of NSW (ACON) asks the Health Department to investigate 5 gay sex clubs that it claims fail to meet minimum standards of hygiene, fail to provide free condoms, lubricant and safe sex information.	SSO 303

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May 1996		Independent Councillors of South Sydney Council, John Fowler and John Bush react to the new membership rules of SGLMG, by questioning the sizable grant the Council gives SGLMG by claiming the organisation is no longer “inclusive”.	SSO 303
May 1996	Canberra	The AIDS and Communicable Diseases Branch of the Federal Health Department is disbanded and its budget re-allocated to HIV/AIDS programs spread across 3 newly formed divisions.	
May 1996		The chair of the Uniting Church’s report on sexuality, <i>Interim Report on Sexuality</i> , with its supportive stance on homosexuality is attacked with abusive phone calls and hate mail.	SSO 315
1 May 1996	Canberra	Australian Capital Territory probate laws are amended to recognise lesbian, gay and de facto couples.	SSO 300
7 May 1996		Channel 7’s <i>Witness</i> program <i>The Dark Side</i> is broadcast and contains pederast allegations against Sydney lawyer, John Marsden.	SSO 302
9-12 May 1996		The 13 th annual International Gay Travel Association (IGTA) is held at the Southern Cross Hotel.	SSO 301
18 May 1996		The Lesbian Space Project (LSP) holds its first open day at its Bedford Street premises.	SSO 303
19 May 1996		The annual Candlelight AIDS Memorial rally starts in Green Park and ends in the Domain and is addressed by Justice Michael Kirby.	SSO 303
23 May 1996		<i>Sydney Star Observer</i> produces a lengthy Special Report on the Police Royal Commission – Witch Hunt or Justice?	SSO 304
23 May 1996		Activists meet with Counsel assisting the Police Royal Commission to raise their concerns about the Commission’s “anti-homosexual bias” and are dissatisfied with her response.	SSO 305
25 May 1996		Poverty Sux Food Drive collects food and raises money for people living with HIV/AIDS.	SSO 303
June 1996		Unions and the Anti-Violence Project (AVP) meet to formulate a training package designed to deal with discrimination and harassment against gays and lesbians in the workplace.	SSO 305
June 1996		A new AIDS drug Saquinavir is subsidised by the Federal Government for people with a CD4 count of 500 or less.	SSO 307



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June 1996		<i>The Crossroads Tolerance Report</i> a report on the services for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender Sutherland Shire residents reveals discrimination, lack of support services and isolation in the area.	SSO 307
June 1996		Police raid the homes of up to 10 gay men as part of the ongoing NSW Royal Commission investigations into police corruption and protection of paedophiles.	SSO 309
June 1996		A major insurance company settles with Peter Thompson after he filed a complaint with the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) against it for refusing to provide any kind of insurance for him because he was perceived as having a high risk of getting AIDS.	SSO 312
2 June 1996		Crisis community meeting on the Police Royal Commission is held at the Oxford Koala Hotel and a Commission Watch Group is established	SSO 306
5 June 1996		The Transgender (Anti-Discrimination and Other Acts) Bill passes the upper house of the NSW Parliament.	SSO 306
6 June 1996		Rainbow.Net, a national gay, lesbian and queer Internet Service Provider is launched at the Exchange Hotel.	SSO 307
23 June 1996		PRIDE week, a celebration of the Greenwich Village Stonewall Riots, commences.	SSO 308
28 June 1996		G Spot, a Friday night girls' club at Top Gun, Newtown starts up.	SSO 308
July 1996	Canberra	The Federal Attorney-General's Department tells the Commonwealth Health Insurance Commission (HIC) to allow access to subsidised gender specific drugs for people who have undergone gender re-assignment surgery.	SSO 311
July 1996		Caesar's Bar opens in the Petersham Inn Hotel, 388 Parramatta Road, Petersham.	SSO 311
July 1996		AIDS groups urge HIV positive people to begin combination drug therapy as soon as possible.	SSO 312
July 1996		The University of Sydney agrees to lift a ban and to allow students with HIV and/or hepatitis to complete degrees in medicine, nursing and health sciences.	SSO 313



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July 1996		The Commonwealth Employment Service (CES) agrees to replace its job referral guidelines which made it mandatory for HIV positive clients to disclose their HIV status to employers applying for jobs with a “direct” or “potential” risk of transmission of HIV.	SSO 313
July 1996		Australia’s largest department store chain, Myer-Grace Brothers changes their bridal registry to recognise same sex couples.	SSO314
4 July 1996	Newcastle	<i>Forbidden Love, Bold Passion</i> , an exhibition exploring the lives of lesbians over the last 90 years, begins its national tour.	SSO 310
10 July 1996		Michael Glynn, founder of the <i>Sydney Star</i> dies.	SSO 312
11 July 1996	New York	US AIDS specialist, Dr David Ho, announces detectable levels of HIV may be eliminated from the bloodstream after a 3-year course of combination drugs treatment.	SSO 311
August 1996		The SGLMG announces its largest operating surplus to date of \$221,000.	SSO 311
August 1996		Dennis Watkins, SGLMG Festival Director resigns. He is later replaced by Jonathan Parsons.	SSO 314
August 1996	Canberra	The Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby (GLRL) releases its submission to the Senate inquiry into the Workplace Relations and Other Legislation Amendment Bill, 1996.	SSO 315
August 1996		Gay escort agencies and men who use them to source under aged males for sex comes under the scrutiny of the Woods Royal Commission.	SSO 317
4 August 1996 21 October 1996		The State Attorney General, Jeff Shaw, launches the NSW Lesbian and Gay Anti-Violence Project Youth Violence Prevention Campaign, <i>Homophobia: What are you scared of?</i> (twice)	SSO 315
10 August 1996		Bev Lange is elected for a second term as President of the SGLMG.	SSO 315
16 August 1996		A report by the NSW Attorney General recommends that judges and prosecutors receive more information about the “homosexual advance defence” and that his department launch a community education campaign to counter anti-gay prejudice and its influence on the criminal justice system.	SSO 316



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19 August 1996		Tickets go on sale for the 1996 Sleaze Ball, <i>Voodoo Circus</i> on 5 October. The poster is designed by Richard Hughes.	SSO 317
29 August 1996		<i>The Sydney Star Observer</i> is now available on the web.	SSO 318
31 August 1996		Steve Spaulding owner of the Greed Sisters Emporium one of the early gay shops in King Street, Newtown, closes up shop due to upmarket rents.	SSO 312
September 1996		Simon Lloyd replaces outgoing GLRL male co-convenor, Keith Marshall.	SSO 322
8 September 1996		Gay and Lesbian Memorial Project founder, Andrew Clark/Fletcher Jetsprees alleges that the Project's AGM decision to cease operation was "illegal".	SSO 325
18 September 1996		The Transgender Lobby Coalition (TLC) takes legal action against the Gender Centre after eight nominees in the Centres upcoming management committee elections were disallowed.	SSO 321
October 1996		Team Sydney lodges a letter of intent with the Federation of Gay Games to hold the 2002 Gay Games with the support of PRIDE.	SSO 327
3-5 October 1996		The Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO) and the Australian Centre for Lesbian and Gay Research convene a national conference on queer health issues, <i>Health in Difference</i> . 300 attend the conference.	SSO 322
5 October 1996		The NSW Minister for Tourism and Transport, Brian Langton opens the Gay and Lesbian Lifestyle Consumer Expo at the Kingsgate Regency Hotel in Kings Cross. 2,000 attend the Expo.	SSO 319
5 October 1996		16,000 attend the 1996 Sleaze Ball <i>Voodoo Circus</i> . Highlights were Lonnie Gordon, Peter Burns and his band Dead or Alive and live performance of Troughman.	SSO 324
11 October 1996		The Federal Government contests the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission (HREOC) decision which awarded a gay man spousal benefits for his partner.	SSO
24 October 1996		Dominic O'Grady is appointed editor of the <i>Sydney Star Observer</i> .	SSO 326

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November 1996		The Annual Assembly of Young Lawyers votes unanimously to support initiatives outline in the Attorney General's report, <i>homosexual Advance Defence</i>	SSO 328
November 1996		Bill Whittaker, spokesperson for People Living with HIV/AIDS, criticises the Australian Drug Evaluation Committee for refusing the approval of an effective HIV drug, nevirapine.	SSO 328
November 1996		Paul Phillips, a chef with Ansett Airlines, has his case of anti-gay violence in the workplace, referred to the Equal Opportunity Tribunal for a hearing.	SSO 329
November 1996		The PRIDE Centre steps in to discuss taking over the Gay and Lesbian Memorial Project.	SSO 328
November 1996		700 people with HIV/AIDS rally at the Domain to protest against the Federal Government's cuts to public housing.	SSO329
November 1996		The NSW Supreme Court rules against Jan Bell's inheritance claim to the full estate of her late partner Diane Watson.	SSO 330
November 1996		Lesbian and gay partners of murder victims are recognised as members of the victim's immediate family under legislation passed by the NSW parliament.	SSO 330
3 November 1996		The 22 nd Polympics is held at Erskineville Oval, with over 400 people attending.	SSO 328
4 November 1996		The Woods Police Royal Commission and Labor MLC Franca Arena are criticised for their roles in precipitating the suicide of former Supreme Court Judge David Yeldham.	SSO 328
15 November 1996		Bill Brown and Andrew Whitbread-Brown celebrate their Supreme Court win in their long running battle with insurance company NIB, The Court declares that they are entitled to NIB's family insurance rate.	SSO 330
21 November 1996		The Sydney Gay and Lesbian Business Association launches Fruits in Suits at the Taylor Square Supper Bar.	SSO 329
29 November 1996		800 people Rally Against Racism at Taylor Square in response to MP Pauline Hanson's attacks on multiculturalism and Aboriginal rights.	SSO 330
December 1996		The Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby joins forces with trade unions and superannuation industry representatives to lobby for the Superannuation Industry (Supervision) Act to be changed to allow death benefits to be paid to the survivor in a same sex partnership.	SSO 332

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December 1996		Terry O’Gorman, President of the Australian Council of Civil Liberties condemns the NSW police Special Branch for keeping files on people solely on the basis of their sexuality.	SSO 333
10 December 1996		South Sydney cuts Mardi Gras funding by \$14,000 to \$36,000 in the light of the SGLMG surplus this year.	SSO 333
18 December 1996		President of AFAO, Bill O’Loughlin welcomes the Third National HIV/AIDS Strategy following a commitment from Federal Health Minister Michael Wooldridge to make a commitment to viral load testing by April 1997.	SSO 334

Sources:

SSO = Sydney Star Observer

