

# WINTER 2018

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THORNE HARBOUR HEALTH

No 19

## AT 35, WE'RE NOW THORNE HARBOUR HEALTH



CEO Simon Ruth opens the 35th anniversary event in the Experimedia space at the State Library of Victoria among a packed crowd of nearly 300 community members. Photo by: Melissa Butters

On Saturday 7 July, we celebrated 35 years of leading Victoria's community response to HIV and AIDS as well as our growth to become one of Australia's oldest and largest LGBTI health organisations. With our legacy in mind, we announced our new name going into the future — Thorne Harbour Health.

The new name comes from two visionary community activists that were instrumental in our origin story, Alison Thorne and Keith Harbour.

"Thorne Harbour Health gives us a fantastic opportunity to tell our story to a whole new generation of people. Alison and Keith represent a much larger group of community leaders, activists, and advocates who worked, and in many cases continue to work, for the health and wellbeing of our PLHIV and LGBTI communities," said CEO Simon Ruth.



Archival Images of Alison Thorne & Keith Harbour  
Photos Courtesy: Australian Lesbian & Gay Archives

In 1983, at Melbourne's first public meeting to address the developing health crisis of HIV and AIDS, one voice stood out amongst the many — feminist, activist and queer liberationist, Alison Thorne. Alison motivated and mobilised the community by asking, 'What are we doing about this? How can we do it? What we need is an organisation!' Alison's rallying cry led to the second community meeting on 12 July 1983 at the Laird Hotel where the Victorian AIDS Action Committee was formed. A year later, the organisation changed their name to the Victorian AIDS Council.

In 1987, Keith Harbour became President of VAC. A man living with HIV, Keith was a pioneering leader who worked for the community from high-level political action to grass-roots activism with the AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power (ACT-UP). Keith continued to work tirelessly to get access to lifesaving medicines for PLHIV. In a special ceremony convened by the then Governor of Victoria, Keith was awarded the Order of Australia medal at his bedside at Fairfield Hospital before he died in 1991.

The decision did not come without a great deal of consideration and consultation. President Chad Hughes explained, "It's been a carefully considered decision, one that was informed by feedback from our members, volunteers, staff, and stakeholders. AIDS Councils are trusted institutions in Australia, but our evolution as an LGBTI community-controlled organisation has seen us outgrow our identity as 'the Victorian AIDS Council'. We're now working with a broader range of LGBTI communities — delivering programs and services interstate and nationally."

The new name debuted with the *Thorne Harbour Health – for the future* video clip, officially unveiled by Minister for Equality Martin Foley. The clip was screened amongst a packed house at the State Library, filled with members, volunteers, staff, and community leaders from partner organisations.

The event also included the launch of the organisation's 2018-2023 Strategic Plan and an outdoor campaign, *There for Us*, featuring a range of faces from our LGBTI communities.

Watch the *Thorne Harbour Health* clip online at: [bit.ly/THHlaunch](http://bit.ly/THHlaunch)



Clockwise from top left: President Chad Hughes; Founding President Phil Carswell acknowledges the many people who led the community response to HIV and AIDS; Keith's sister Bev Harbour & family; Alison Thorne poses with Thorne Harbour Health volunteers. Photos by: Melissa Butters

# L.O.V.E

The second annual LGBTI Organisations Volunteer Event (L.O.V.E.) at St Kilda Town Hall saw over 150 volunteers and staff get together to recognise the vital contribution volunteers make to our community. This year, Transgender Victoria and the Australian Lesbian and Gay Archives joined Thorne Harbour Health, JOY, and Switchboard as hosts for the event. With special guests Commissioner Ro Allen and Minister for Equality the Hon. Martin Foley, the night was hosted by Dani Weber and included performances by gender diverse dancer Raina Peterson and Shout Youth Chorus.

*Photos by Andy Miller, Imaginarium*



# VACSTRAVAGANZA

Returning to North Melbourne's Meat Market on 21 June, the RuPaul-inspired VACstravaganza delivered another night of entertaining trivia and drag to raise funds for Thorne Harbour Health. Hosted by Dean Arcuri's Frock Hudson with performances by co-host Polly Filla and Glitterfist, the night saw teams take each other on in a bit of trivia as well as the highly entertaining mini challenges like "Drag on a Dime" and "Lip Sync For your Life". From the red carpet to the silent auction, the Melbourne Surge Water Polo Club was there to assist throughout the festivities as the Surge Pit Crew. With a packed house of over 350 people, the night was another amazing success with over \$12,500 raised on the night.

*Photos by Andy Miller, Imaginarium Photography*



# SISTERS ARE DOIN' IT FOR THEMSELVES



(From Left) Hana Assafiri, Teresa Avila, Lyn Morgan & Feyi Akindoyeni during panel discussion — Women in Business: Diversity, Inclusivity and Support.

Now in its fourth year, the annual LGBTIQ Women's Health Conference returned to Melbourne over 12-13 July 2018. Officially opened by the Minister for Health Jill Hennessy, the theme for this year's two-day conference was "Research, Resilience, Respect." The conference is the only one of its kind in Australia and offers a unique opportunity for researchers, project workers, clinicians, community leaders, and health advocates to share ideas, findings, and engage in meaningful discussion around the health and wellbeing of LGBTIQ women.

The conference also presented a fantastic opportunity to announce the recent transition from the Victorian AIDS Council (VAC) to Thorne Harbour Health. This included one of the organisation's two namesakes, Alison Thorne, as a keynote speaker on day one with her rousing address to conference attendees as a longstanding LGBTIQ liberationist who is passionate about addressing the detrimental health impacts of profit driven systems.

Held during NAIDOC week, the conference was perfectly in line with this year's NAIDOC theme of "Because of Her, We Can", celebrating the invaluable contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women. In fact, the end of day one included an Aboriginal Voices Panel featuring a number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women from all around the country, moderated by Commissioner Ro Allen and co-facilitated by Allison Toby.



Aboriginal Voices Panellists: Dodie Eggmolesse (QLD) and Ester Montgomery (WA)

With so many topics up for discussion, the conference's working group endeavoured to capture an array of voices across the two days of programming. With keynote speakers including Jerril Rechter (VicHealth CEO), Ashley Waite (Interwine), Sally Rugg (Change.org) and international speaker Naomi Fontanos (GANDA) from the Philippines, the conference had a busy line up of breakout sessions and panel discussions tackling a range of issues, including relationship violence, social isolation, sex work, drinking behaviours, tobacco cessation, sexual health, and cancer screening.



International Keynote: Naomi Fontanos, Philippines "A dangerous life: A Filipina transgender woman's story of trauma, survival and resilience"

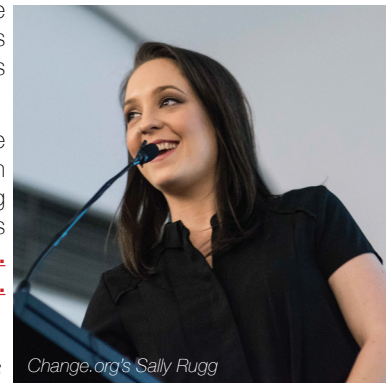


Keynote address by feminist activist & queer liberationist Alison Thorne

The conference attracted 350 attendees on each day, declaring it a complete sell-out. The conference's Working Group Chair, Caroline Bayer said, "The energy in the room each day was incredible. We can be so proud, as a team, to have put on such an incredible event this year, but we're also proud as a community for being willing to have what are sometimes tough but necessary conversations. Our speakers often share very personal stories in order to bring issues and messages for service providers to the surface, and we thank them all for being so brave and so willing. We wanted delegates to come and listen, share, discuss, and explore opportunities and ideas.

I am certain we will see plenty of developments coming from this year's conversations."

For more info on the LGBTIQ Women's Health Conference including details on next year's conference, head to: [lbq.org.au](http://lbq.org.au) or [facebook.com/LGBTIQWHC](https://facebook.com/LGBTIQWHC).



Change.org's Sally Rugg



(From Left) Rebecca Dominguez, Jane Green, Jess Olivo & Ruby Mountford during panel discussion — Gay, Straight or Lying: Bisexual Women in Lesbian Spaces.

# THERE'S A GROUP FOR THAT

Did you know that we run therapeutic groups addressing a range of issues impacting the health and wellbeing of our gender, sex, and sexuality diverse communities? Here's a few coming up at Thorne Harbour Health's location at Level 5, 615 St Kilda Road.

## DRINK LIMITS

*Starts Wednesday 10 October*

*Meets weekly from 6pm-8pm for 8 weeks*

Drink Limits is a free therapeutic group for lesbian, bisexual or queer women and non-binary folk who would like some support to change their alcohol use. It doesn't matter what age you are or how much you drink – if alcohol is not working for you, this group can help. Call **03 9865 6700** and ask to speak to Awombda or Julia or email [julia.packard@thorneharbour.org](mailto:julia.packard@thorneharbour.org)

## REVISIONING

*Starts Tuesday 28 August*

*Meets weekly from 6pm to 8pm for 20 weeks*

Do you find yourself always acting like the 'boss' or controlling your partner's decisions? Blaming your partner or other factors for making you angry? Finding it hard to express your feelings without exploding? ReVisioning is a group where same-sex attracted men can learn about breaking the patterns of controlling or abusive behaviours. The group offers a safe environment where you can explore power and control in your relationships and raise your awareness of the effects your behaviours have on your partner or other people you care about. To find out more, contact: [revisioning@thorneharbour.org](mailto:revisioning@thorneharbour.org)

## FEARLESS

*Starts Thursday 27 September*

*Meets weekly from 6pm to 8pm for 8 weeks*

We live in a world that can be disapproving and hostile towards us as LGBTIQ people. Without even being aware of it, we can sometimes buy into this negativity and let it impact how we feel about ourselves. Fearless is a therapeutic group for members of the LGBTIQ community who feel impacted by homophobia. It is facilitated by professional counsellors and aims to provide a respectful and safe environment to explore the effects of homophobia. The group will cover a range of topics including: coming out, self-esteem, sex, relationships, community and future planning. To express your interest in joining the group or find out more, please call **(03) 9865 6700**, or email [counselling@thorneharbour.org](mailto:counselling@thorneharbour.org)

## CALMING ANXIETY

*Starting in October (TBC)*

*Meets weekly from 6pm to 8pm for 6 weeks*

Anxiety is incredibly common in Australia and rates are particularly high within our LGBTIQ communities. At some point in our lives, most of us have been affected by hostility or discrimination. Over a lifetime, these experiences can contribute to the development of longer-term patterns of anxiety, reducing our ability to live authentic and rewarding lives. Calming Anxiety is a therapeutic group for LGBTIQ individuals to explore and manage the effects of anxiety in a safe and supportive environment. Find more info, call **03 9865 6700** or email [guy.campbell@thorneharbour.org](mailto:guy.campbell@thorneharbour.org).



## MIFF FEATURES COMING BACK OUT BALL FILM

The world premiere of *The Coming Back Out Ball Movie* has been selected as the Closing Night Gala of this year's Melbourne International Film Festival (MIFF) on Saturday 18 August.

Supported by the MIFF Premiere Fund, *The Coming Back Out Ball Movie* tells the stories of Melbourne LGBTIQ+ elders in the lead-up to an October 2017 ball, auspiced by Thorne Harbour Health, being held in their honour and also documents the process of All The Queen's Men staging the event which featured performances by cabaret legend Robyn Archer, Opera singer Deborah Cheetham, Gerry Connolly (as the Queen), Carlotta and many more.

Hosted to honour Australia's LGBTIQ+ pioneers and their achievements, and to combat invisibility for senior members within the alphabet community, the Coming Back Out Ball was a glittering Melbourne event, featuring a who's who of Melbourne's elder LGBTIQ community, held during last year's marriage equality debate.

Featuring some familiar faces from the Thorne Harbour Health and the PLHIV communities, *The Coming Back Out Ball Movie* is a life-affirming love letter to senior members of Melbourne's alphabet community with important messages about pride, acceptance, equality and inclusion at all stages of life – and a whole lot of dancing!

After the film, get your dancing shoes on for MIFF's famous Closing Night festivities, with DJs, drinks - and some special live guest appearances.

For tickets head to: <http://miff.com.au/program/film/miff-closing-night-gala-the-coming-back-out-ball-movie>

## SAVE THE DATES

Before you know it, winter will be behind us and spring will have us back out and about. Here's a few dates to put down in your diary now!

- **Saturday 20 October - Northside Bizarre**  
This one-day street festival has been called Melbourne's mini-Folsom. Hosted by the Laird, this cheeky fundraiser benefit's our David Williams Fund and JOY 94.9.
- **Sunday 11 November - Annual General Meeting**  
The official AGM of VAC & GMHC will include the Keith Harbour Address and our Thorne Harbour Health Awards.
- **Saturday 1 December - World AIDS Day**  
With World AIDS Day falling on the weekend, watch this space for this year's line up of activities raising awareness for the broader community that "HIV Still Matters."