



First Mardi Gras Inc. Annual Report 2021

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Front cover photos and design: © Geoff Friend Photography www.geofffriend.com.

About First Mardi Gras Inc.

First Mardi Gras Inc. is a not for profit community association for 78ers formed in April 2017. We enabled participation by a broad range of 78ers in the 40th Anniversary of the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras (SGLMG). Since then, we have focused on staging events of interest to 78ers and the broader LGBTIQ community.

We aim to ensure democratic representation of 78ers including our members electing the First Mardi Gras Inc. Management Committee and the election of the SGLMG 78ers Committee by Mardi Gras 78er Lifetime Members.

The operations of the association are governed by our Constitution and the Associations Incorporation Act, 2009. Our objectives are to:

Celebrate our history

- Raise awareness of the role of 78ers as the foundation generation of Mardi Gras.
- Educate the broader community on the 42 years of LGBTIQ history that followed the first Mardi Gras.



Inspire our community

- Encourage younger LGBTIQ Australians to take collective action on issues they care about.
- Showcase the progress on LGBTIQ rights made in NSW and Australia in a way that can be replicated across our global community.

Fight for the future

- Increase understanding of human rights issues currently affecting LGBTIQ communities within Australia and internationally.
- As an ageing community, advocate for appropriate support and services.



Photos by Anne Morphett (top and bottom photos) and Steve McLaren (middle photo) of 78ers float participants in the 2021 Mardi Gras Parade assembly area.

Highlights

50th Anniversary of CAMP Inc. Announcement – 10 September 2020

The 50th anniversary of *The Australian* article reporting the formation of the Campaign Against Moral Persecution (CAMP Inc.) was on 10 September 2020.



Photo: William Brougham.

Protest Mark Latham's anti-trans bill – 10 October 2020

We endorsed the Community Action for Rainbow Rights rally and opposed the court ruling banning the protest, as NSW allowed large sporting events during Covid restrictions.

Fifty Years of Visibility – Pioneers and Connections before 1978 – 29 November and 6 December 2020

In these *Salon78* forums, we highlighted early 1970's activism and its link to the upsurge of LGBTIQ struggles after the events of 1978.



Badges of the early 70s. Ken Davis collection.

Social Lunches – 13 February and 6 June 2021

We held Social Lunches for 78ers at Pymont's Terminus Hotel.



Social lunch 6.6.21. Photo courtesy Diane Minnis.

Community Recognition Statement for The 78ers – 17 February 2021

Alex Greenwich MP, Independent Member for Sydney, moved a Community Recognition Statement in the NSW Legislative Assembly.

City of Sydney Council minute for CAMP Inc. 50th anniversary – 22 February 2021

Sydney Lord Mayor, Cr Clover Moore, presented a Council minute recognising the 50th anniversary of the founding of CAMP Inc.

SGLMG Meet the 78ers Online Forum – 21 February 2021

SGLMG's 78ers Committee held an online forum in place of the Fair Day tent where people come to ask about the events of 1978.



Daytime march 24.6.78. Photo: Sallie Colechin.

LGBTQ History Walks – 26 and 27 February 2021

Robert French led three history walks – two for Vision Impaired People and the 10th annual ACON Spark Youth Group History Walk.



Photo: Robert French.

Parade – 6 March 2021

A contingent of 78ers led the Parade into the Sydney Cricket Ground, following the First Nations float. Our theme this year was Fifty Years of Visibility. We carried placards celebrating events from 1969, 1970 and 1971 as well as the 40th anniversary of the first summer Mardi Gras.



Photo: Anne Morphet.

Kill the Bill Demonstration – 17 April 2021

This Community Action for Rainbow Rights rally was a call to action against both of the Bills that Mark Latham's One Nation is trying to push through the NSW Parliament.



Photo: Garry Wotherspoon.

78ers Pawfect Dog Picnic – 2 May 2021

A group of 78ers, partners and friends enjoyed a picnic at the Hawthorne Dog Park in an outdoor COVID-safe environment.

Defend LGBTIQ rights in NSW: No right to discriminate! Demonstration – 5 June 2021

Community Action for Rainbow Rights organised another rally in their campaign against the proposed Religious Freedoms legislation and the Education (Parental Rights) Bill currently being considered by the NSW Parliament.



Photo: Robert Knapman.

Salon78: Why did Mardi Gras Move to Summer? Community vs. Commercial Scene' – 26 June 2021

At this Salon78 forum, we heard about the tumultuous community debates on the move to summer and the changes to Mardi Gras that grew out of this major shift.

Report from Co-Chairs



With the pandemic and associated socio-economic impacts, it has been a very difficult year both in Australia and internationally. There are threats to our rights in Australia, and to a greater extent, in authoritarian populist, religious and national chauvinist regimes around the world. The struggles for our queer rights are inseparable from the overall struggles against sexism and racism, and for democratic and human rights everywhere.

This was a very special year for First Mardi Gras Inc. and our community. It marked the 50th anniversary of the establishment of CAMP in mid-1970, which became the first gay and lesbian advocacy and support organisation with groups across Australia. We are blessed to have among us people who were bravely active back in 1970, and in the gay and lesbian liberation movement in the early 1970s.

We were happy to be able to participate in person in the 2021 Mardi Gras parade, in its new stadium incarnation. We met in person when we could, and for most of the year, transitioned to virtual meetings, enabling equal participation by members and supporters outside of Sydney.

In some ways the generations engaged in the events of 1978 have life skills to enhance responses to this new pandemic, not least of which because of the experience we had in HIV. But also, as older people, we are more vulnerable to Covid-19 and potentially more isolated during extended lockdowns. With other organisations, we have tried to highlight the physical, economic and emotional needs of older queers in these new constrained circumstances.

First Mardi Gras Inc. has continued to voice our diverse experiences of activism and community so that contemporary struggles are informed by our past, and lessons are not lost.

We salute the more than 30 78ers who carried the views and images of 78ers in media and student interviews, speaking engagements, videos and photo shoots.

Thank you to the six 78ers elected to the SGLMG 78ers Committee and 78ers collaborating with InterPride, Oceania Pride, World Pride Copenhagen, WorldPride Sydney, the European Pride Organisers Association, First Nations Rainbow, Australian Queer Archives, Pride

History Group, ACON, Community Action for Rainbow Rights and various university student groups.

And big thanks to all our members and volunteers, and to Committee members: Rebell Barnes, Barry Charles, Robyn Kennedy, Maree Marsh, Richard Thode and Karl Zlotkowski.

Ken Davis and Diane Minnis

Co-Chairs
First Mardi Gras Inc.

Special Thanks

First Mardi Gras Inc. would like to thank these people for generous financial and raffle prize contributions during the year: Peter Page, Julie McCrossin, Wanda Kluge, Margaret Payne, Sandra Gobbo, Sue Fletcher, Melanie Schwerdt, Greg Bradshaw, John Hannaford, Mazz Image, Robyn Kennedy, Ross McMurtrie, Rebell Barnes and Gary Case.

We very much appreciate Sandra Gobbo's ongoing work on our social media presence and Em Cunningham's IT support and website updates. Thanks to Cherie Brindley for the rainbow masks 78ers wore at the Parade.

Many thanks to the following photographers and videographers who allow us to use their work: William Brougham, Geoff Friend, Sallie Colechin, Steve McLaren, Jim Anderson, Jane Becker, Markham Lane, Donald McPherson, Ann-Marie Calilhanna, Dan Gosse, William Yang and Anne Morphet.

Fifty Years of Visibility

September and October 2020 marked the 50th anniversary of LGBTQ visibility in Australia. This was when the formation of CAMP Inc., the first openly homosexual support and activist organisation in Australia, was first publicised in a national newspaper.

Australia's first "coming out" in the media was the television appearance of the Australasian Lesbian Movement's Francesca Curtis on Channel 9's Melbourne-based current affairs program, *The Bailey File*, in May 1970.



Phyllis Papps and Francesca Curtis appearing on This Day Tonight in 1970

The Australasian Lesbian Movement (ALM) – initially named the Daughters of Bilitis after the US group – was formed in Melbourne in 1969. At first ALM was a closed lesbian support group but they had spokeswomen who commented on issues related to lesbians.

In June 1969 the ACT Homosexual Law Reform Society was formed and included gay men and straight allies.

In July 1970, following the reports of the first Gay Pride March in New York, John Ware and Christabel Poll invited a few people to discuss forming a group of "learned homosexuals to counter discriminatory stereotypes in the

media". They decided to form Sydney's Campaign Against Moral Persecution, or CAMP Inc.

After letters were sent to various newspapers advising of the formation of CAMP Inc., John Ware was interviewed in *The Australian* on 10 September 1970.

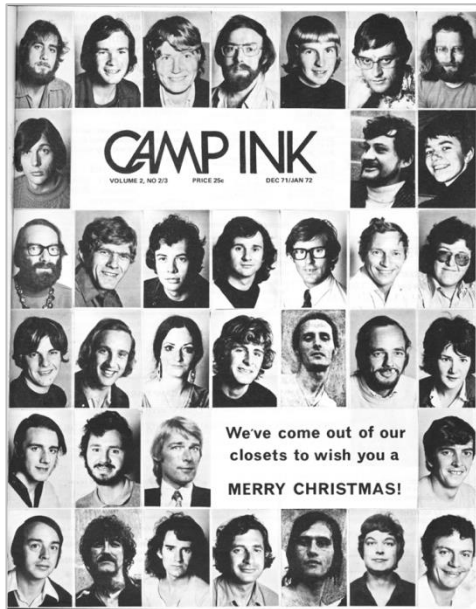
On Saturday 19 September 1970, an article, *Couples*, appeared in the magazine section of *The Australian*. In the article, Janet Hawley interviewed John Ware, his partner Michael Cass and Christabel Poll. This was followed by an interview with John Ware and Michael Cass on ABC-TV's *This Day Tonight* two days later.



John Ware, Christabel Poll with copies of CAMP Ink. Photo: *The Bulletin*, 13.3.71.

Then, on 6 October 1970, ALM's Phyllis Papps and Francesca Curtis were interviewed on ABC-TV *This Day Tonight*. They are featured in the documentary *Why Did She Have To Tell The World?*, released in 2020.

However, it was John and Christabel's appearance in the *Couples* article that led to the establishment of a series of CAMP groups across Australia and the impetus for a broader homosexual rights movement.



CAMP INK December 1971/January 1972

Rather than being just the anniversary of one organisation, however, the article is now viewed as the symbolic start of the gay and lesbian movement, and the beginning of fifty years of LGBTQ visibility and achievement



2021 78ers contingent members with placards. Photo: Anne Morphett.

Before this, there were really no publicly self-declared homosexuals or homosexual organisations,

though there were, necessarily closeted, social groups. Within twelve months, there were CAMP groups in Melbourne, Adelaide, Brisbane, Perth and Canberra (all in a loose federation).

Campus groups, independent of CAMP, were established at Sydney University and the University of NSW; and a Gay Liberation sub-group that had formed within CAMP broke away in January 1972 to form Sydney Gay Liberation. Similar Gay Liberation groups then formed in other capitals.



2021 78ers contingent members with placards. Photo: Geoff Friend.

It is not just that these were brave people for the time but these events mark the beginnings of LGBTQ visibility in Australia and are worthy of commemoration.

In the 2021 Mardi Gras Parade, the 78ers contingent celebrated Fifty Years of LGBTIQ+ Visibility by carrying placards highlighting key events and activists from 1969, 1970 and 1971. The 40th anniversary of Mardi Gras move to summer was also celebrated.

Coming Out in the 70s Exhibition

The State Library of NSW held the exhibition *Coming Out in the 70s: Early Gay and Lesbian Activism in Australia* from 28 November 2020 to 30 May 2021. The Exhibition marked the 50th anniversary of the emergence of the gay and lesbian rights movement in Australia.



ACON's Justin Koonin with 78er advisors and contributors to the exhibition. From left: Peter de Waal, Justin, Garry Wotherspoon, Robyn Kennedy, Robert French, Diane Minnis, Ken Davis and Pam Stein. Photo: Courtesy of State Library.

Drawing on its extensive collection, the staff at the State Library put together a remarkable exhibition, tracing the development of this activism over the decade. There are three sections, *Being Seen*, *Being Heard*, and *Being Together*.



The exhibition banner at the front of the State Library and (from left) 78ers Peter de Waal, Robert French, Pam Stein, Ken Davis. Photo: State Library.

The first section, *Being Seen*, recounted how, when

homosexuality was still perceived as a mental illness, a crime, or a sin; in September 1970 The Australian newspaper reported on the formation of a new group aiming to change Australia's perception of homosexuals. This was CAMP Inc., a political group built around sexual orientation, something new for Australia, and it soon became part of a strong political movement, especially in Sydney.

Documents here included copies of the various gay press, the first gay magazine, CAMP INK, and publications from the various liberationist groups that emerged.

Being Heard showed how open talk about homosexuality brought many lesbians and gay men 'out', and these activists fought for change, creating one of the most

successful reform movements in Australian history.

They made the personal 'political', marching in solidarity and 'shocking the straights' with spontaneous actions like 'zaps'.



*The Being Seen section of the exhibition.
Photo courtesy State Library.*

Newsletters, manifestos, flyers and posters spread the word about gay issues. Using humour and catchy slogans, they attracted media attention and gained public support. Badges and T-shirts proudly displayed a connection to the cause. Gay and lesbian groups encouraged shared identity and offered safe meeting places.

Festivals and conferences created the chance to build new fields of study. Gay Pride Week 1973 was one highpoint for Sydney's gay rights movement, and then, in June 1978, Sydney activists joined in International Day of Gay Solidarity events around the world – our first Mardi Gras.

But there was also partying and fun and the humour in taking the mickey out of mainstream society's attitudes.

In *Being Together*, the focus was on the gay cultural life that blossomed

over the Seventies, when artists, filmmakers, photographers and performers developed unique perspectives that sparked radical individual and collective creativity. Sydney's Feminist Bookshop promoted women's writing and lesbian bands made 'wimmin's' music.

The Exhibition has brought together an outstanding collection and it was great to see so much of our history on public display. A brief online version is still available at: <https://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/stories/coming-out/>



*The Being Heard section of the exhibition.
Photo courtesy State Library.*

The Advisory Committee for the exhibition included 78ers Robert French, Garry Wotherspoon, Robyn Kennedy and Pam Stein, along with community photographer C. Moore Hardy.

The Advisory Committee is currently working with the State Library on a larger exhibition to coincide with Sydney WorldPride 2023. With a working title of *Pride 2023*, the exhibition will be based on potential themes of diverse identities and the cultural infrastructure of queer lives.

Salon78 Forums

This year we conducted three *Salon78* forums, all of them online via Zoom. This was part of our ongoing *Salon78* series – celebrating the upsurge of activism, both political and cultural, that followed the first Mardi Gras.

Part 1 of Fifty Years of Visibility – Pioneers and Connections before 1978

On 29 November 2020, we ran the first part of *Fifty Years of Visibility – Pioneers and Connections before 1978*. Our aim was to highlight the pioneering activism of the early 1970's, and how it laid the way for the upsurge of Australia's LGBTIQ activism after the events of 1978.

We included Melbourne viewpoints because the history of activism in Australia is not just a Sydney thing. These forums showed how strong the political and social links between the two cities were back then, even in pre-digital days.

The first forum was chaired by Betty Hounslow, former Co-Chair of First Mardi Gras Inc.



Gay Pride Week Demonstration 15 September 1973, starting at Sydney Town Hall. Photo: John Englart.

Speakers at the forum were:

- Robert French – Early activism timeline: late 1960s to mid 1970s
- Abbie Pobjoy – Australasian Lesbian Movement from 1969
- Barry Charles, Gabrielle Antolovich – Early activism: CAMP Inc., Women's & Gay Liberation
- Dennis Altman – US influences and the early Sydney scene.

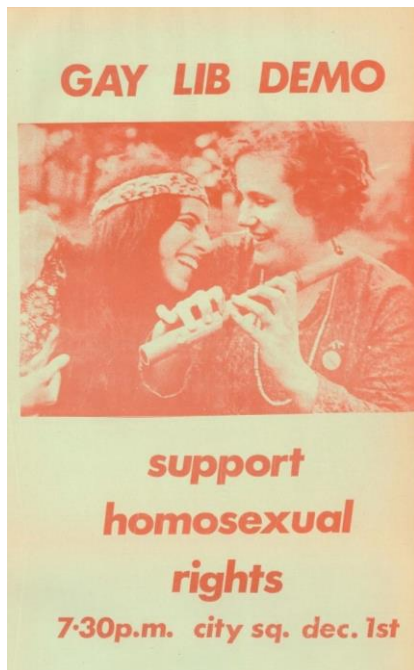


Speakers at Part 1 of *Fifty Years of Visibility*. From left: Robert French, Abbie Pobjoy, Dennis Altman, Barry Charles, Gabrielle Antolovich.



Speakers at Part 2 of *Fifty Years of Visibility*. From left: Jamie Gardener, Jude Munro, Diane Minnis, Robyn Kennedy, Ken Davis.

Part 2 of Fifty Years of Visibility – Pioneers and Connections before 1978



Poster for Gay Lib Demo, 1 December 1972, Melbourne City Square.

On 6 December 2020, we ran part 2 of *Fifty Years of Visibility – Pioneers and Connections before 1978*; chaired by First Mardi Gras Inc. Committee Member Karl Zlotkowski. The speakers were:

- Jamie Gardiner – UK experience, HLRC and “Equality for Homosexuals. Now”
- Jude Munro – Early Melbourne Gay Liberation
- Diane Minnis – Early lesbian activism, Melbourne and Sydney
- Robyn Kennedy – Progression from early activism, CAMP Inc. 1974 onwards
- Ken Davis – Developments from early activism to triggers for 1978.

Both forums attracted a diverse and appreciative audience.

Why did Mardi Gras Move to Summer? Community vs. Commercial Scene

On 26 June 2021, we held the forum *Why did Mardi Gras Move to Summer? Community vs. Commercial Scene* – close to the anniversary of the Stonewall riots in New York in 1969.

At community consultations in 1980, activists were evenly split between the move to summer or the Parade staying in June. Discussion included the impact of the commercial gay and lesbian scene on the Parade.

Then, in 1981, the parade was shifted to February. This year we celebrated the 40th anniversary of the first summer Mardi Gras in 1981.

At this Salon78 forum, we heard from 78ers Susan Ardill and David Abello on the tumultuous community debates. Then former Mardi Gras President Murray McLachlan spoke about the changes to Mardi Gras that grew out of the shift and added the third C after Community and Commercial scene – Climate!

We had an interested audience, including some younger activists, and lively discussion followed after the speakers' contributions.



Speakers from left: Susan Ardill, David Abello, Murray McLachlan

78ers and Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras

The elected SGLMG 78ers Committee is the key forum for liaison between 78ers and Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras. The committee is responsible for coordinating the 78ers involvement in Fair Day and Parade as well as recommending 78ers for nomination as Life Members of SGLMG.

In late 2019, Diane Minnis, Sallie Colechin and Helen Gollan were elected for two-year terms and Lance Mumby, Kate Rowe and Rae Giffen elected for one year. In December 2020, the committee farewelled Lance, Rae and Kate as Karl Zlotkowski, Penny Gulliver and Richard Riley were elected for two years.

As the COVID pandemic spread, the committee was concerned about the isolation of regional and rural 78ers. On Saturday 11 July 2020 the committee held a Zoom forum with Sallie Colechin and Helen Gollan leading discussion. Social work academic Virginia Mansel Lees spoke about available support. On 30 August, the committee conducted a second Zoom forum: *Support and Connection in a COVID World* to share how we're all coping with COVID.

Meet the 78ers Forum – Sunday 21 February 2021

COVID restrictions meant that Fair Day was cancelled in 2021. So Mardi Gras suggested they host an online Meet the 78ers Forum in place of the 78ers tent, where we answer questions about our history.

Mardi Gras promoted the forum well and we had a good attendance.



Diane Minnis speaking at the Meet the 78ers Forum with a photo by Branco Gaica.

Diane Minnis gave the background to the 'Day of International Gay Solidarity' on June 24 1978 and told of police violence she witnessed at the end of the Mardi Gras.



Sallie Colechin speaking at the Meet the 78ers Forum with one of her own photos.

Sallie Colechin spoke, using her photos, to describe the morning march and the Mardi Gras where people gathered in Taylor Square to march behind a truck to Hyde Park.



Penny Gulliver (bottom right) in a photo from Mirror Australian Telegraph Publications.

Penny Gulliver related desperate scenes of trying to pull her friend back from the police. The TV coverage of the Mardi Gras outed her and her self-defence teaching contract wasn't renewed.

Karl Zlotkowski then spoke about the *Drop the Charges* rally on the morning of 15 July 1978 which ended up outside Darlinghurst Police Station and where there were further arrests.

Richard Riley told of his experience in the *Drop the Charges* march on 27 August 1978 from the 4th National Homosexual Conference at Paddington Town Hall. Marchers were met by a line of police across Taylor Square.



Karl Zlotkowski speaking at the Meet the 78ers Forum with a photo by Sallie Colechin.



Richard Riley speaking at the Meet the 78ers Forum with a photo by Geoff Friend.

Parade – Saturday 6 March 2021

The evening Parade around the Sydney Cricket Ground was a big success, a testimony to the extraordinary work of SGLMG staff, Board and many volunteers in making the best out of a terrible situation. The usual “business model” of the festival, fair day, parade and party had to be completely rethought under direction of the state government and Covid-19 restrictions.

Marching into the Sydney Cricket Ground was very different to

parading up Oxford Street, but so special to celebrate an unbroken line of 44 Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parades.

When we marched in to the SCG, the 78ers contingent was greeted by an excited crowd who stood and clapped and cheered as we reached each section. Electronic signs all around the ground flashed in pink and black “FOREVER GRATEFUL TO OUR 78ERS – THE FIRST MARDI GRAS”.



78ers in the 2021 Parade assembly area, from left: Sallie Colechin, Bill Ashton, Diane Minnis, Maree Marsh, Ken Davis, Karl Zlotkowski. Photos: Steve McLaren.

There were 51 78ers, partners and friends in our contingent and seven of the group rode on a buggy. After marching around the ground we went to our 78ers seating. We had a terrific view of the meticulously organised Parade with smaller contingents marching out of two entrances and up a central path past the TV cameras.

This year the Mardi Gras 78ers Committee agreed on a long term plan for the 78ers Parade contingent, starting in 2021 and leading up to the 50th Anniversary

in 2028. Our placards in the 2021 parade celebrated key events and key activists from 1969, 1970 and 1971, Fifty Years of Visibility and the 40th anniversary of Mardi Gras' move to summer.

This year, the placards were painted in the Mardi Gras Workshop by volunteers: Karen Askew, Karl Zlotkowski, Kell Boston, Lance Day and Diane Minnis. The black on white signs were linked to key messages read by Julie McCrossin as we entered the SCG – the effect was electric.



The 78ers contingent approaching the entrance to the SCG. Photo: Geoff Friend.

March – Saturday 6 March 2021

The sixth of March 2021 was a bit like 24 June 1978, with a militant daytime street march and a larger night-time parade. Some 78ers took part in the daytime Pride in Protest (PiP) organised "Take Over Oxford Street March".

The demo had intersectional demands around transgender rights, queer refugees, police, decriminalising sex work and drug use, Black Lives Matter, opposition to One Nation MLC Mark Latham's Parental Rights Bill and to the federal "religious freedom" Bill.



The 78ers contingent buggy approaching the entrance to the SCG. Photo: Geoff Friend.



The Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence with 78er Fabian Lo Schiavo (at right). Photo: Ann-Marie Calilhanna.



Placards celebrating key events and activists and Fifty Years of Visibility. Photo: Steve McLaren.



The SCG crowd welcoming the 78ers contingent. Photo: Geoff Friend.



Electronic signs around the SCG welcoming 78ers. Photo: Anne Morphet.



78ers Mark Gillespie (fist raised) and Ken Davis (in 78ers t-shirt) at Pride in Protest march. Photo: William Brougham.

InterPride and Oceania Pride

InterPride is the world's largest association of Pride organisations with 550 members from 86 countries. InterPride licenses WorldPride celebrations – including New York in June 2019, which a group of 78ers attended, Copenhagen in August 2021 and Sydney in February and March 2023.

Member organisations from Oceania include Prides from Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Guam, Kiribati, New Caledonia, Samoa, Tahiti, Tonga and Tuvalu.

Oceania Pride is an informal gathering of Pride organisers that has been meeting monthly since July 2020. Many are members of InterPride, but membership is not needed to participate.



Members of the Samoa Fa'afafine Association Inc.
Photo courtesy of Alex Su'a

In September 2020, InterPride members in Oceania elected two representatives to the InterPride Global Advisory Council. They were First Mardi Gras Inc. Committee member Robyn Kennedy and Russell Weston, Co-Chair of First Nations Rainbow Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Corporation.

In November 2020 Robyn Kennedy was elected to the Board of InterPride as Vice President Global Outreach and Partnerships (VPGOP). There are four VPGOP on the Board, each with responsibility for five of InterPride's 20 regions.

Robyn's responsibility is for growing and supporting Pride and Global Advisory Council members in Oceania (which includes Australia), Asia, the Middle East and two regions in Europe.

Following Robyn's election as a Vice President, First Mardi Gras Inc. Co-Chair Diane Minnis was elected to the Global Advisory Council role.



Marchers in the Auckland Pride Parade. Photo courtesy of Rainbow Pride Auckland.

Oceania Pride meetings always have updates on the global organisation, but the highlights of every meeting are presentations by members.



Members of Rainbow Pride Foundation, Fiji.
Photo courtesy of Isikeli Vouvalu.

This year we had presentations from Prides including the Samoa Fa'afafine Association, Goulburn Valley Pride, Rainbow Pride Auckland, Trans Pride Australia and the Rainbow Pride Foundation, Fiji.

Oceania Pride is reaching out to Pacific Island Prides to encourage them to be more active and to ensure that they effectively represent all Prides in the Region.



Webinar-for-Pride-Organisers-March-2021.

Copenhagen WorldPride 2021

At the 2017 InterPride General Meeting and World Conference, Copenhagen Pride won the right to host WorldPride 2021 along with the 2021 EuroGames to be held in Malmo, Sweden. Planning for WorldPride was significantly disrupted by COVID-19 in 2020 and leading up to the event to be held in August 2021.

Much smaller crowds than anticipated are now likely, given that many countries including Australia are unable to travel internationally.

The Copenhagen 2021 team are addressing the constraints imposed by COVID-19 with several strategies including:

- Scaling down events like the opening and closing ceremonies
- Employing COVID safety protocols at all events
- Live streaming of many events such as the Democracy

Festival in Copenhagen and the opening ceremony of the EuroGames

- Multiple approaches to enable online access to major events such as the Human Rights Conference, including live streaming, interactive platforms, and recording of proceedings.



Campaigning against Anti-LGBTIQ Bills

In NSW, our community currently has two items of legislation to worry about, both proposed by One Nation: the Education (Parental Rights) Bill and our state's very own religious freedoms Bill.

The first Bill attacks the rights of trans and gender diverse students and penalises teachers and school counsellors for supporting students or teaching that LGBTIQ people should be treated equally.

The second Bill echoes the divisive and dehumanising Federal Religious Discrimination Bill currently before the Federal government.

In Canberra, Attorney General Michaelia Cash has announced that she is consulting on the Federal Religious Discrimination Bill, with a view to having draft legislation in parliament before the end of 2021.

In March 2021 the SGLMG 78ers Committee called upon the Mardi Gras Board to issue a public statement in opposition to these bills. The committee wanted to see sponsors supporting the community, when we are under political attack.

In early June, First Mardi Gras Inc. came out strongly against Latham's Education (Parental Rights) Bill and was quoted in an article in the Star Observer.

We endorsed rallies against this legislation organised by Community Action for Rainbow Rights (CARR) – on 10 October 2020, 17 April 2021 and 5 June 2021. A contingent of 78ers marched with our banner at both the April and June 2021 rallies.

At the 5 June rally, First Mardi Gras Inc. Secretary Barry Charles spoke passionately and said: *“Under the guise of religious rights, the forces of division, scapegoating and hate are marshalling in a rear-guard effort to turn back fifty years of LGBTIQ, Women's, and Black rights advances. We must recognise that if they succeed against our transgender youth; they will eventually come against us all.”*

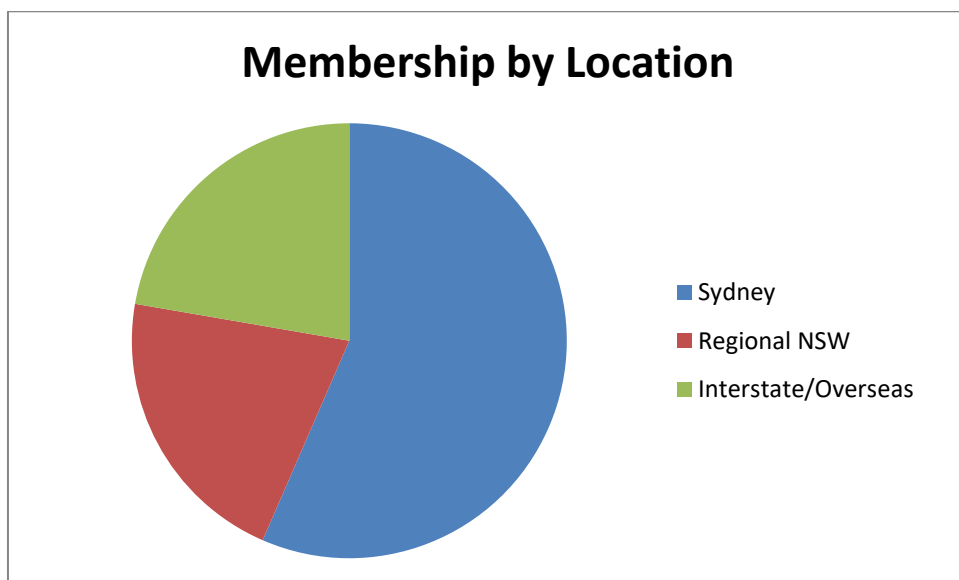
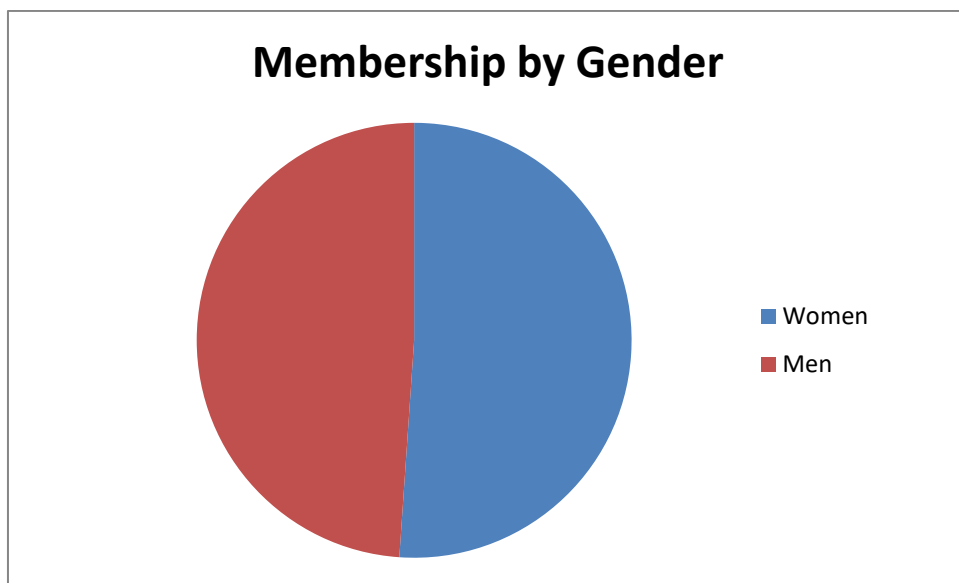


At the 5 June demo. From left: Robyn Kennedy, Bob Harvey, Toby Zoates, Diane Fieldes, Maree Marsh, Richard Thode, Diane Minnis, Greg Reading. Photo: Robert Knapman.

Membership

By the end of June 2021, 192 people had joined First Mardi Gras Inc. One hundred and sixty two of those members are 78ers and five 78er members have passed away. Three members declined to renew their membership. We also have 22 Associate Members, who are not 78ers.

Our membership is still close to half women and men, with 94 (51.1%) women and 90 men (48.9%). Overall, 104 (56.5%) First Mardi Gras Inc. members live in Sydney, 39 members (21.2%) live in regional NSW and 41 (22.3%) live interstate or overseas.



Financial Report 2021

First Mardi Gras Inc. ABN 23 393 628 948 For the year ended 30 June 2021

Summary

Our revenue (\$1,402) came almost entirely from membership renewals and donations, as social activities were severely curtailed by the COVID-19 pandemic. There was also a small contribution from the raffle.

Expenditures were operational (printing, web-related and a Zoom subscription) plus membership of InterPride and Associate Membership of EPOA, the European Pride Organisers Association.

Because of COVID-19 restrictions, there were no face to face general meetings of First Mardi Gras Inc. and hence no venue hire or catering expenses during the Financial Year.

Our bank account was used to transfer a grant of \$8,500 from ACON Health to the publishers of the upcoming book on CAMP Inc., as ACON needed an entity with an ABN to receive the funds. This money was immediately transferred to the recipients and not reported as income or expenditure.

Income

Total income of \$1,402.00

Expenditure

Total expenditure of \$1,436.74

Closing Balance

Small decrease from \$4,082.39 (30 June 2020) to \$4,047.65 (30 June 2021)

Balance Sheet

Assets	30 June 2021	30 June 2020
Current Assets		
Cash at Bank	4,047	4,077
Adjustment		5
Total Assets	4,047	4,082
Liabilities	NIL	NIL
Retained earnings	4,082	3,879
Result for year Profit/(Loss)	(35)	203
Total Equity	4047	4,082

Adjustment: \$5 membership paid 30 June 2020, not taken up in FY 2019-2020 report.

Profit and Loss

Income	2021	2020
Membership and donations	1272	1281
Events	-	911
Fundraising	130	-
Grant	-	-
Other Revenue		100
Total Income	1,402	2,292

Expenses	2021	2020
Accounting Software (Xero)	-	190
Advertising	-	-
Catering		500
Domain Name Fees (Vodien)	-	-
Email Hosting (Vodien)	104	105
EPOA Associate Membership	89	96
Exhibition Materials	-	-
Facebook and Google	89	104
Fundraising Merchandise	-	-
Insurance	-	-
InterPride Membership	134	172
Miscellaneous	-	50
Postage	-	-
Printing & Stationery	363	165
Reporting (Fair Trading)	84	-
Software (MS Office)	-	-
Venue Hire	-	351
Web Hosting (Squarespace)	342	361
Zoom Subscription	231	-
Total Expenses	1,436	2,094

Notes:

1. Certain income and expense items have been retained despite no activity since 2018, in consideration of possible events during World Pride 2023 in Sydney.
2. InterPride and EPOA memberships and Squarespace Web Hosting are paid in foreign currencies and therefore subject to exchange rate variation.

Media and Speaking Engagements

First Mardi Gras Inc. has received more interview and speaker requests this year than ever before. 78ers have also written articles and published books. Listed are 61 contributions by First Mardi Gras Inc. members and other 78ers.



L-R: Sue Fletcher, Ken Davis, Diane Minnis, Peter Murphy. NSW Police/Playhead Productions - Standing Together.

Event/Media	Title	78er/s	When
Student interview	Media portrayal of the LGBTIQ community	Karl Zlotkowski, Diane Minnis	12-Jul-20
NSW Police/Playhead Productions film	Standing Together	Sue Fletcher, Ken Davis, Diane Minnis, Peter Murphy	Launched 28-Aug-20
Foreword to Sydney Arts Students' Society journal 1978	The first Mardi Gras and why is it still important to fight for LGBTIQ rights	Ken Davis, Diane Minnis	28-Aug-20
Launch event	SASS journal 1978	Diane Minnis	28-Aug-20
Pride Centre Founders' Event	Pride Ambassador for Victorian Pride Centre	Julie McCrossin	23-Sep-20
UTS Queer Collective	The first Mardi Gras and history of queer Sydney	Fiona Hulme	27-Oct-20
Salon78 Forum	Part 1: Fifty Years of Visibility – Pioneers and Connections before 1978	Robert French, Gabrielle Antolovich, Barry Charles, Dennis Altman, Betty Hounslow (MC)	29-Nov-20
Salon78 Forum	Part 2: Fifty Years of Visibility – Pioneers and Connections before 1978	Jamie Gardiner, Jude Munro, Diane Minnis, Robyn Kennedy, Ken Davis, Karl Zlotkowski (MC)	6-Dec-20
Fbi Radio – Out of the Box program	Music that is personally significant	Robyn Kennedy	11-Feb-21
National Art School	SKIN DEEP Tattoo photographic exhibition	Britt Kissun, Geoff Ostling	19-Feb to 7-Mar-21
SGLMG Zoom Forum: Meet the 78ers	78ers reflecting on the impact of the first Mardi Gras	Diane Minnis, Sallie Colechin, Penny Gulliver, Richard Riley,	21-Feb-21

Event/Media	Title	78er/s	When
		Karl Zlotkowski	
Joy FM	78ers in Mardi Gras Parade	Britt Kissun	22-Feb-21
SGLMG Queer Thinking	Dating when you're different	Julie McCrossin	22-Feb-21
Compass webinar	LGBTQIA65+ Equality at Every Age	Jude Munro, Julie McCrossin (MC)	25-Feb-21
LGBTIQ History Walk	For Vision Impaired People	Robert French	26-Feb-21
10 th ACON Spark Youth History Walk	Hyde Park Barracks, State Library exhibition	Robert French	27-Feb-21
LGBTIQ History Walk	For Vision Impaired People	Robert French	27-Feb-21
ANZ Tongzi Rainbow Alliance	Segment for Blued online LGBT chat: first Mardi Gras	Penny Gulliver	2-Mar-21
Red Bull webcast	If these walls could talk	Robyn Kennedy	2-Mar-21
SBS TV and online	Coming out in the 70s exhibition interview	Robyn Kennedy	2-Mar-21
MBC TV South Korea	Interview on the role of Pride parades	Robyn Kennedy	2-Mar-21
Cuppa of Life	The first Mardi Gras and its impact	Ken Davis, Diane Minnis	2-Mar-21
MTV Tik Tok Mardi Gras Live	78ers experience of the first Mardi Gras	Ken Davis	3-Mar-21
Proud at Woolworths Group	What was it like being in the first Mardi Gras?	Robyn Plaister, Peter Clare	3-Mar-21
AbbVie ANZ LGBTIQ+ group	78ers experience of Mardi Gras	Karl Zlotkowski	24-Mar-21
The Guardian, Australia	Rainbows are everywhere but no one's really around	Kate Rowe	5-Mar-21
Take Over Oxford Street demo	Today and 1978 – fuelled by a desire for justice	Mark Gillespie	6-Mar-21
Mardi Gras Parade	Co-MC at the SCG	Julie McCrossin	6-Mar-21
LGBTI+ Health in Difference Conference	International Perspectives Zoom Panel	Julie McCrossin (MC)	23-Mar-21
Aged Care and Disability Commission	Photo shoot for 78ers aged 65+ for agency's website	Robyn Plaister, Lance Day, Penny Gulliver, Karl Zlotkowski	Apr-21
NSW Department of Communities and Justice Pride Group	Experiences of the first Mardi Gras	Sandra Gobbo, Garry Wotherspoon	15-Apr-21
Health in Difference & LGBTI+ Ageing, Aged Care Webinar	International Panel	Julie McCrossin (MC)	22-Apr-21

Event/Media	Title	78er/s	When
Kill the Bill demo	How the action we took in 1978 is relevant now	Mark Gillespie	17-Apr-21
Star Observer	NSW State Library gearing up for WorldPride 2023	Robyn Kennedy	13-May-21
CSU Zoom with 78ers	LGBTQI community challenges in the 70's and today	Karl Zlotkowski, Fiona Hulme, Barry Charles	19-May-21
ACON LOVE Project forum	Ageism in the LGBTIQ community	Gail Hewison	20-May-21
Student interview	History of Mardi Gras	David Abello	20-May-21
2FM Skid Row	Fifty years of LGBTIQ history in the Inner West	Robyn Plaister	20-May-21
Palgrave Macmillan	Policing Practices and Vulnerable People, contributing author	Robyn Kennedy	21-May-21
Star Observer	South Africa hit by wave of gay, trans hate murders	Robyn Kennedy	24-May-21
Adecco Australia Pride Network	Discrimination Interviews for IDAHOBIT event	Gay Walsh, Richard Thode, Sallie Colechin	17-May-21
NSW ALP Rank and File Women's Conference	Only Activism and Labor in Power Produces LGBTIQ+ Reforms	Diane Minnis	29-May-21
Star Observer	78ers take on Mark Latham's Anti-Trans Bill	Robyn Kennedy	2-Jun-21
No right to discriminate! demo	Forces of hate – turning back 50 years of reform	Barry Charles	5-Jun-21
Student interview	Queer commercialism and commodification	Barry Charles	17-Jun-21
SGLMG video	Pride Month – Historic moment of 24 June 1978	Diane Minnis	24-Jun-21
Apple Pride group video	Lead up to, experiences of 78ers at the first Mardi Gras and its impacts	Karl Zlotkowski, Robert French, Robyn Plaister, Ken Davis, Diane Minnis	Recorded late Jun-21
Salon78 Forum	Why did Mardi Gras Move to Summer? Community vs. Commercial Scene	Susan Ardill, David Abello, Diane Minnis (MC)	26-Jun-21
Never-Never Books	Endings & Spacings	Pam Brown	30-Jun-21
Austin Macauley Publishers	Free Radical - A Memoir	Gabrielle (Gay) Walsh	30-Jun-21
Radio BayFM 99.9 Byron Bay	Not Thinking Straight – Older LGBTQI people	Peter Clare	30-Jun-21

Vale

We remember two 78ers who passed away during the year: **Kendall Lovett** and **Rob Hayward**. If you know of any other 78ers who have passed away, please let us know at info@78ers.org.au.

Kendall Lovett passed away on 21.10.2020, a few weeks after turning 98. Ken is survived by his partner of 27 years, Mannie De Saxe.

Ken was a tireless activist and campaigner for LGBTIQ, refugee and human rights. Most demos we went to from the late 70s onwards had Ken's placards, banners, slogan vests or people-shaped placards – all in his distinctive calligraphy.

Ken was a lovely supportive colleague in the Gay Solidarity Group (GSG), which organised the first Mardi Gras and the massive Drop the Charges campaign that followed.

Ken was arrested in the August 1978 demonstration in Taylor Square and often had bail money ready during Mardi Gras parades and demonstrations.

Ken supported the Gaywaves radio program on 2SER FM over many years, providing a weekly news bulletin – Gay Radio Information News Service.

Ken stayed active in GSG – later renamed Lesbian and Gay Solidarity – well into the 2000s, after he and Mannie moved to Melbourne.



Mannie De Saxe (L) and Kendall Lovett (R).
Photo: Dave Urquhart.

Rob Hayward passed away on 15.2.2021 after being diagnosed with an aggressive brain tumour in May 2020. Rob is survived by his partner of 16 years, Sam Savva, also a 78er.

Sam said that Rob was a gentle soul, emotional, giving and easy going. Rob and Sam registered as a de facto couple.

As well as his involvement in the first Mardi Gras, Rob was active in anti-Vietnam war protests and was a keen environmentalist.



Rob Hayward (left) and Sam Savva, 78ers bus, 2020 Parade. Photo: Steve McLaren.



78er Kendall Lovett (L) and his partner Mannie De Saxe (R) holding the Lesbian and Gay Solidarity banner at an 'Out of Iraq' rally for peace, Melbourne, 2005. Photo: John Story, ALGA.

A list of 78ers can be found at **Who was there in 1978?** on the First Mardi Gras Inc. website at: <https://www.78ers.org.au/the-78ers/>.

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