



DIVERSITY CENTRE STAGE AT AGM



The Thorne Harbour Annual General Meeting on Sunday 17 November has been regarded as one of our most inclusive and diverse meetings in the organisation's 36-year history.

The event opened with the 27th Keith Harbour Address, delivered by 2019 International Mr Leather Jack Thompson. The occasion marked the first time an openly HIV positive trans person has delivered the annual keynote.

Jack is also the first trans person of colour to win the title of International Mr Leather (IML) in its 40-year history. Earlier this year, his "You Are Enough" speech at IML 2019 challenged the various forms of stigma and discrimination he has faced. The powerful speech was widely shared on social media. With his recent visit to Australia coinciding with the AGM, we were fortunate to have him deliver this year's address.

Jack's candid and heartfelt address spoke to his experiences of shame as well as the importance of resilience and pride:

"We have all felt shame about something that we probably didn't have to, if we had just talked about it. We have all felt shame enough not to tell the people we love something very important about who we are. But feeling that shame doesn't keep you safe from anything else that's out there. So being proactive – getting tested, knowing who you are, being ok with the things that you like and don't like – is something I learned far earlier. If I can impart that to anyone else, I will say it all day, every day."

"On that stage in May was the first time, out loud to any amount of people more than two people at a time, that I admitted I was HIV positive. And that's one of the reasons why they asked me to be here today. And for the first time after that was the first time I felt pride in who I was, which includes everything – it includes the HIV, it includes being trans, it includes being leather, it includes being biracial, it includes being queer, it includes being poly- all of that. So I want to thank all of you for letting me come here today so I can be proud of who I am."

During his President's Report, Chad Hughes remarked on the notable increase in the number of LGBTI communities we're engaging since becoming Thorne Harbour Health as well as the increased diversity we've started to see in our volunteers, staff, and clients.

After several years of service on the THH Board, Christopher McDermott, Chrissie Feagins, and Deborah Sykes all reached their term limits. Meanwhile, Neil Pharaoh, Tim Sykes, and Steve Farley-Odgers were successfully elected to the Board.

The AGM also included the annual Thorne Harbour Health Awards recognising a number of significant contributions made to the organisation and the communities we serve. The 2019 President's Award went to Joseph Tesoriero for his work in making pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) available and affordable for those who need it. Journalist David Marr received the Media Award for his work on human rights, homophobic violence and corruption in the church. Special Service Awards went to Nathan Despott in recognition of his founding of the Brave Network to support LGBTI people of faith as well as Renea and Charlotte Johnson for their tireless volunteerism in support of THH. Other Special Service Awards went to Greg Axtens for his work advocating on behalf of LGBTI people with a disability and Caitlin Grigsby for improving the lives of regional LGBTI people through the Gippsland Pride Initiative. This year's Greig Friday Young Leader Award went to Jason Choi for his commitment to and work with the Peer Education Program.

Two Life Memberships were awarded this year. These included Life Memberships to community personality and volunteer Luke Gallagher as well as community activist and previous THH (then VAC) president Kirsty Machon.

"It's fantastic to see such a diverse range of individuals being recognised for, not only their significant contribution to the organisation, but their desire to see a better place for LGBTI people in our community," said Thorne Harbour CEO Simon Ruth.

The event closed with the release of the 2018/2019 Annual Report, *What We Talk About When We Talk About Health*. In addition to reporting on the organisation's activities over the past financial year, the publication features sixteen powerful portraits from across our LGBTI communities (cover pictured right). The full report can be found online at:



thorneharbour.org/about/annual-reports/



THH Award Winners (from left): Jason Choi, David Marr, Charlotte Johnson, Jason Tesoriero, Caitlin Grigsby, Nathan Despott, Greg Axtens. Photos by: Michael Franz

HYPOTHETICALLY SPEAKING IN ADELAIDE

After five success runs as part Midsumma, our annual Hypothetical made its debut in South Australia. As part of Feast 2019, the hypothetical *Loose Lips in Public Places* was held at the University of Adelaide's Elder Hall on Wednesday 20 November.

The hypothetical format, made popular in the 1980s by the Geoffrey Robertson Hypothetical series on the ABC, throws a panel of community leaders, media personalities and politicians into a fictional narrative to navigate a not-so-fictional series of social issues. To date, Thorne Harbour's hypotheticals have explored alcohol and drug use in LGBTI communities, travelled into the future of Australian politics, and even thrown a panel into smalltown Victoria for a whodunnit. *Loose Lips in Public Places* follows two commuters, Janice Plackett and Mark Barker, as they

cross paths time and time again on the tram. Along the way, the panel is brought in to discuss topics including nationalism, religious discrimination, conversion therapy, sexual racism, U=U, gender identities and outing queer politicians.

Moderated by Dean Arcuri, the all-queer community panel included: Jack Thompson (2019 Int'l Mr Leather), Lucy Hackworth (Feast Program Coordinator), Jody Anderson (Ms Adelaide Leather 2018), Councillor Robert Simms (Adelaide City Council), Holley Skene (SA Health), Mark Tripodi (Radio Adelaide broadcaster), and Kim Gates (LGBTI community advocate).

The highly entertaining evening also led to some meaningful and insightful discussion from the panellists that left the audience with plenty to talk about after the event. The event will also be available on SAMEISH's page on [Facebook](#) and [YouTube](#).

COMMUNITY MOURNS JEFF MONTGOMERY



Jeff (left) and his partner Jason in an Emen8's campaign earlier this year.

Recently, our HIV activism community said farewell to a passionate advocate, Jeff Montgomery.

Jeff came to Melbourne via Texas, chasing love and a new life, and he found both in unexpected places.

Originally moving to Australia to marry his wife, Jeff ultimately found his partner Jason here in Melbourne. In fact, the couple were featured earlier this year in Emen8's *Guys like me. Guys Like You. Guys Like Us.* campaign. They created a life here together – along with their cat Max, Jason's son, and a wall-to-wall collection of Star Wars memorabilia, Jeff's lifetime obsession.

If there was anything that mattered to Jeff more than Star Wars, it was his commitment to his community and friends. HIV formed a significant part of Jeff's early advocacy and volunteer work, bringing food to patients at a service for people with AIDS defining illnesses back in Austin.

For Jeff, taking PrEP himself resulted in a monumental shift in how he perceived his own journey with HIV. PrEP removed his fear of

HIV, and created space for him to advocate for the sexual health of his peers. Jeff joined the PAN [PrEPaccessNOW] committee to assist people get access to PrEP before it was publicly available.

A colourful character, Jeff dabbled in the art of drag under the name Vinegar Douche – a brash John Waters-esque 60s housewife. When out-and-about in the leather and fetish scene, Jeff often sported a glittery blue beard in full gear in a nod to his PrEP advocacy work and his delight in playing with gender.

Through PAN, Jeff was a member of the Victorian PrEP Accord – working alongside Thorne Harbour Health and other health sector and research groups to create an empowered PrEP community. An avid baker, Jeff's PrEP-shaped chocolate cake was voted 'Most Delicious' at the DT's Hotel Bake-Off raising money for Pride March Victoria.

As an avid leather community member, Jeff competed in the 2017 Laird Leatherman competition – authoring 'The Marvellous Rumpus' as part of his competition entry. The adult picture book detailed various fable creatures attempting to attend the Marvellous Rumpus. The story promoted togetherness in the leather community through Jeff's trademark cheek and charm.

Jeff passed away on the 26 July 2019. He will be remembered by his friends, community, and is survived by his loving partner Jason and family in the US.

Jeff spoke candidly about his life, love, and activism for Thorne Harbour Health's *Staying Negative* campaign. You can read his story at: stayingnegative.net.au/stories/jeffs-story.

POLICY & ADVOCACY UPDATE

Through our ongoing policy and advocacy work, we're always tackling a range of issues impacting our LGBTI communities and people living with HIV.

From drug law reform to LGBTI equality, you can find out where Thorne Harbour stands on a range of issues online at: thorneharbour.org/about/policy-advocacy/

Recently we made a submission to the Department of Justice and Community Safety to look at the legal options for prohibiting harmful conversion practices in Victoria.

We also recently updated our position on drug decriminalisation. Thorne Harbour believes the personal possession and use of all drugs should be decriminalised, and public health interventions should be introduced to reduce drug-related harms.

Check out these documents and others to get a better understanding on these issues as well as our recommendations for positive change going into the future.

STREET FEST SUCCESS FOR NB2019



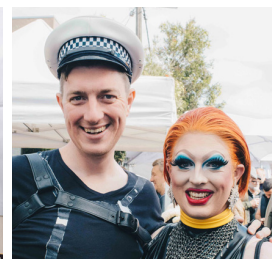
We saw another amazing turnout from our communities on Saturday 19 October for Northside Bizarre 2019. The annual fundraiser for Thorne Harbour's David Williams Fund and JOY 94.9 brought in over \$36,000 on the day.

Hosted by the Laird Hotel, the kinky community festival takes over The Laird, the neighbouring Collingwood Masonic Hall and the section of Henry Street that runs between the two venues. With over 2500 people attending the free event, the day offers an array of ways to support the fundraising efforts – from gold coin donations to some astounding bids in the Auction House.

While it would come as no surprise to see leather, rubber and kink communities come through on the day, the event brings together a plethora of community tribes to lend a hand – with Dykes on Bikes running the cloakroom to the VicBears running the 'BearBQ'. Plus, a handful of LGBTIQ sporting clubs continue to delight the crowd with their baked creations as part of the 'MasterBaker' competition, including the 2019 winners – the Melbourne Smashers badminton club.

The entertaining day also sees JOY radio personalities, kink community performers, and Thorne Harbour's legendary auctioneers keep the crowd going throughout the program.

You can check out the full gallery of pics from this year's event on the Thorne Harbour website at: thorneharbour.org/news-events/galleries/ and **save the date – Northside Bizarre returns on Saturday 17 October 2020.**



From Top Left: Crowds in the Alley Marketplace; Cal Hawk & Dee Mason host the first auction of the day; leather bound attendees; THH volunteers; an unsuccessful throw at the Eagle Leather Dunk Tank; MasterBaker Winners - The Melbourne Smashers; and various festival goers. Photos by: Mel Butters

WAD 2019 KICKS OFF SUMMER SEASON

With WAD falling on Sunday 1 December, our Red Ribbon Street Appeals will kick off on Friday 29 November with Thorne Harbour and SAMESH volunteers out and about at train stations and various CBD locations.

We've seen a fantastic increase in corporate engagement. So on Friday 29 November, you'll also be able to find WAD volunteers at 101 Collins Street, Carlton United Brewery, Energy Australia, CPA Australia, CBRE, Australian Unity, The Department of Health and Human Services, The Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, The Alfred Hospital, and ANZ at 833 & 839 Collins Street, reaching their 9000+ employees!

Friday will also include the official WAD community launch and forum at the Doherty Institute with Minister for Health, the Hon. Jenny Mikakos opening the event and a keynote address from Prof. Sharon Lewin.

On Sunday 1 December, keep an eye out for our volunteers at the Arts Centre, the opening of Prahran Square, Charlie & the Chocolate Factory at Her Majesty's Theatre, as well as Stockland Shopping Centres (Point Cook, Doncaster, Ballarat, Taralgon).

If you fancy a snag, say hello to the SAMESH team at Bunnings Woodville in Adelaide on Friday 29 November or the Thorne Harbour Country team at Bunnings Bendigo on Sunday 1 December.

World AIDS Day this year also coincides with the National Gallery of Victoria International's launch of the Keith Haring and Jean-Michel Basquiat exhibition. Check out their *Art for Change* events on the day to explore art as a vehicle for activism and awareness.

Candlelight vigils have long been a part of our WAD proceedings, and you'll have a few options on Sunday 1 December. SAMESH will be hosting a vigil at 57 Hyde Street in Adelaide from 1:30PM. Thorne Harbour Country will be at the vigil at Hepburn Pavilion, Lake Daylesford from 7:30PM. The Positive Living Centre will be hosting the Candlelight Memorial from 2PM with MC Luke Gallagher, the AIDS Memorial Quilt display, a keynote from Fiona Patten MLC, and performances by Rachel Trevorrow Dunham, Jon Jackson, Melbourne Gay and Lesbian Chorus, and Dolly Diamond. For more info, head to:

thorneharbour.org/news-events/calendar-events/

WHATS ON!

HOLIDAY HOURS

From Tuesday 24 December through Wednesday 1 January, many of our sites will be closed or will be open for limited hours. For updated hours of operation during the holidays, head to: thorneharbour.org/contact/

17 JAN

Mooning 2019

Perhaps The Laird's cheekiest fundraiser of the year, Mooning sees guys bare all to raise funds for the David Williams Fund. A night to make your whole week. *The 18+ event is restricted to cis & trans men only.*

lairdhotel.com

19 JAN

Midsumma Carnival

Every year, our various LGBTIQ communities come together in a big way for Carnival. You'll find us amongst the stalls in Alexandra Gardens from 11AM-6PM, and then stick around for T-Dance from 6-10PM.

midsumma.org.au

26 JAN

Queer Pool Party

We'll be once again taking over the Prahran Aquatic Centre for our annual Queer Pool Party. Join us for this FREE event filled with water sports, summer tunes, a sausage sizzle, and those lovely folks from Melbourne Surge Water Polo. Bookings are required and the ticket allocation last year was gone well before the event so grab your tickets now. We'll see you poolside! midsumma.org.au



29 JAN - 6 FEB

Company of Men

As one of the hottest exhibitions in the Midsumma line-up, Company of Men 2020 is moving to downstairs at the iconic Club 80 to showcase creations from male-identifying, queer artists from around the globe. The exhibition explores queer masculinity through art and will include community forums, kink classes, and a life drawing class. Be sure not miss opening night!

midsumma.org.au

2 FEB

Pride March

Join our colourful community as we take to the street for the annual Pride March down Fitzroy Street in St Kilda. It all kicks off at 12PM! Don't forget your sun cream and plenty of water. midsumma.org.au



4 FEB

Volunteer Info Session

Trying to figure out how you can get involved with us as a volunteer? Come along to 615 St Kilda Road from 6PM. Register at: thorneharbour.org/news-events/calendar-events/volunteer-info-session/



9 FEB

AIDS Memorial Garden Walking Tour

Marking 30 years since the AIDS Memorial Garden was opened at Fairfield, join in on this free walking tour and morning tea. Book at: midsumma.org.au



20-25 FEB

IGLA 2020 - Int'l Gay & Lesbian Aquatics Championships

We're proud to be sponsoring IGLA 2020 as hundreds of queer athletes make their way to Australia for this international LGBTIQ+ aquatics competition at Melbourne Sports and Aquatics Centre. You can cheer our local teams with Melbourne Surge playing water polo and the Glamourheads in swimming, but also check out diving, open water swimming, synchronised swimming and the legendary 'pink flamingo'. melbourne2020.org



5-9 MAR

ChillOut

Make your way to Daylesford for the biggest Queer Country Pride Festival over the Victorian long weekend. Carnival, Bush Dance & the parade — we'll be there for all the festivities. chilloutfestival.com.au

Stay up to date on all the latest across the organisation online at thorneharbour.org or check us out on [facebook.com/thorneharbour/](https://www.facebook.com/thorneharbour/) or follow us on [@ThorneHarbour](https://twitter.com/ThorneHarbour) or [instagram @ThorneHarbour!](https://www.instagram.com/ThorneHarbour/)