

MAGazine

The Newsletter for Mature Age Gays

April, May and June 2009 Edition



This *fabulous* shot of our walking *guys* behind the MAG letters. The pic was taken from the top of our bus as we proceeded up Oxford Street, heading towards Taylor Square.

Photo courtesy of Alan

Despite us being Float #123 out of 135 Floats in the Parade, the crowds were very supportive of us older gay guys; as were the volunteers at the barricades.

Look us up on the web
magnsw.org

MAG is a project of



President MAGazine



Hello Everyone,

Well it is hard to believe that we are here post Fair Day and Mardi Gras and all is over for another year. There are just far too many wonderful guys to thank for all their efforts, they know who they are!! I do want to particularly mention a few very special people who contributed greatly to making both events such a resounding success. Firstly I want to thank all that gave of their time for the entire day at Fair Day, but especially John O'Dea and Harry West for their extraordinary contribution with the Plants and Jams. John Morrissey who flew over from New Zealand, hired a truck and gave of his time to help load and unload all the plants for sale on Fair Day. Alan Granland and John Bell who also gave of their time to assist with the unloading of the plants, as well as driving the truck. All these guys were not members of MAG at the time. David our Secretary, who as his alter ego *Dame Dolly Devine of Marrickville*, spruiked all day for our raffle. Jon Allwood from the UK for his exquisite hand made Greeting Cards. Ken Mears for designing the wine raffle pyramid and for his contribution for designing and decorating the bus in the Parade. Well done all for a magnificent effort!!

By the time this article goes to print my beautiful boyfriend will be back home in the UK. He was a great inspiration for me at Fair Day and Mardi Gras and I will miss him immensely. I look forward when I make my next visit to the UK, possibly in June this year. I thank him for all the help he gave to MAG over this special season. Until next time take care. Love from your President - Erroll.



Erroll & Jon at raffle table, take shelter from the rain at Fair Day

MAG Mature Age Gays
Caring for each other,
sharing friendships and
affection with each
other in similar
situations to lead as full
a life as possible



Jon & Erroll on the top of our Bus in the Parade

OUR PLANNED EVENTS

11 April
ACON's Housing Project

25 April

Sam Everingham

The Art of Living Dangerously
[Writing the lives of eccentric Australians]

9 May

Our Annual General Meeting

30 May

To be advised

13 June

To be advised

27 June

To be advised

Mardi Gras Hi Guys,

I wonder if any of you know what the words **'mardi gras'** really mean. I didn't. It means Fat Tuesday, and originated in New Orleans in 1699. Notice the middle 2 numbers.

In New Orleans, Paris and Rio, Mardi Gras is always celebrated 47 days before Easter Sunday, on the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday, with the official colours being purple, green and gold. Purple for justice; green for faith; and gold for power.

I don't know about you guys, but the first Mardi Gras celebration I marched in was a lonely affair in New York City, back in the 60s, beginning at Greenwich Village and marching up Broadway to Central Park. We were only a stalwart group of about 100, and were looked on with disdain and spat upon by passers-by in the streets.

Now when we marched in the Mardi Gras in Sydney, up to 500,000 people blew kisses and shouted encouragement to us as we paraded brilliantly with an extravaganza of floats and costumes, designed to collectively celebrate our individuality and embrace the **message of the event 'Nations United' with our own proclamation... 'MAG Salutes The World'... and how our world has changed!**

But has it? What now exists is the racism, ageism and discrimination we find in our own community. The general public has almost accepted us as an entity, no longer a threatening one. We are part of society, and it has taken decades for this to be accomplished, and we rightfully should celebrate this achievement. But I do believe we tend to stigmatise our own community by too often presenting gays as foppish, loutish and feminine, when that is really not the *total* essence of homosexuality. Being gay does not necessarily have to equate with being feminine, as charming and brilliant as that can be when in the hands of our own, Dame Dolly Devine. But that is a creation, not the man himself, as we all can attest to. On the other hand, it can also be an accentuation of masculinity, with one man binding with another, thereby doubling the masculine genes.

There are those of us in our so-called queer community who, other than their sexual preference, are really no different from any other of our species, in other words— just as boring. We are all homosapiens first and heterosexual, bisexual, homosexual, transsexual and asexual afterwards. No future anthropological study, when examining our frozen remains thousands of years from now, will be able to distinguish who was gay, straight or otherwise, unless they **had found the 'gay' gene by then.**

I think our Mardi Gras with its conglomerate of all aspects of our community is **MAGnificent**, and congratulations to all who made our MAG entry so brilliant, but with so much hatred in the world between one sect or belief and another, **wouldn't it be fabulous if one year we went back to Fat Tuesday and invited the entire community, gay and straight to march together, celebrating not only our differences but also our common humanity.**

And we could then add pink to the purple, green and gold.

With love Steve



Steve and Dame Dolly at Fair Day
Photo courtesy Rod Spark

Secretary MAGazine

2009 Fair Day – at Victoria Park, Broadway

It was cloudy, it rained a couple of times, I got wet and the crowds were down, but MAG was there for all to see. John and Harry did a fantastic job with the plants and their delicious jams. They even had some Dolly Orange Marmalade, that sold very quickly. Jon from the UK brought 100 hand made greeting cards that were also a great hit and sold within minutes of being put on display. Our wine raffle for *dirty sex* [that was thirty six bottles of wine] that could be won, was well supported. Our empty wine bottle pyramid created by Ken was a huge success, as was his suggestion that the customers write out their own tickets, helped speed up the selling tickets procedure. **Thank you:** - John o'b, Harry, Ken, John, Lionel, Simon, Peter, John G, John S, Damian, John G, Bill, Chris, Alex, Erroll, Peter, Ross, Kent, Roscoe for your help on the day. **For without their help, MAG's presence would not have been the success that it was.** I am pleased to report that we even made over \$2,000. A special thank you is extended to John from Wellington, *the Land of the Long White Cloud* [New Zealand] for providing a truck and driver to collect the plants from Woronora and deliver same to Victoria Park *gratis*.

2009 Mardi Gras Parade – Our theme was MAG Salutes the World!!

We were 123rd Float out of 135 Floats. We waited almost four and a half hours in what I would describe as the *Elizabeth Street Concentration Camp*. President Erroll almost got himself arrested as he was going to carry Harry West, who is 86, over the barricades, after the area was *locked down* and Harry could not get into the area. Sometimes I think Mardi Gras is time **for the power to go to some Lesbians' heads.** One common sense official let Harry enter at a side gate. Despite the long **WAIT**, it was a great evening. We were very well received by the crowds, as can be seen from the front page photo and others on pages 5 & 6— they were great! [Thanks Allan for the pics of the crowds].

I regret to advise that I will not be involved in MAG's Parade for 2010. I waited for almost an hour for the bus at the entrance gates, but the bus had already entered the marshalling area, earlier than it should have. This is the second year I have been *stuffed around*; so next year, I plan to just be a participant, not an organiser.

Thank you **Michelle** from **Photomedia** for taking heaps of fantastic photos of the guys and of the Bus. These pics can be ordered at a cost of \$5.00 a print — very good value. Please **check with me to view at Michelle's Photo Book of the many photos that she took on the evening.** I also wish to thank **Alan & John G** for their other photos — they certainly captured both the events — Fair Day and the Parade.

Vale It is with much regret that I advise that Terry Morrison, the partner of Ray for 44 years, passed away in February. Terry was 75 years old. A larger number of MAG guys, **including myself, attended Terry's funeral.** We wish Ray and Terry's family strength and peace at time sad time.

David, Secretary & Editor of the Newsletter.
Tel: [02] 9516 2063.



Dame Dolly Devine with the wine bottle pyramid



With one of the gorgeous ACON Angels Oh my God!



With two cuties before the Parade **4**

Mardi Gras Theme:
Nations United

MAG's Theme:
MAG Salutes the World

MAGazine



Another shot of the crowds, from top of the bus



**Michelle's our
photographer's
Business Card**



Lorraine from Wellington, NZ

To all who joined our Bus in the
Parade - thank you and we hope
you had a great evening.

Many thanks Ken for decorating the
bus and also to the guys who
helped out with the banners &
flags.



John and Ian

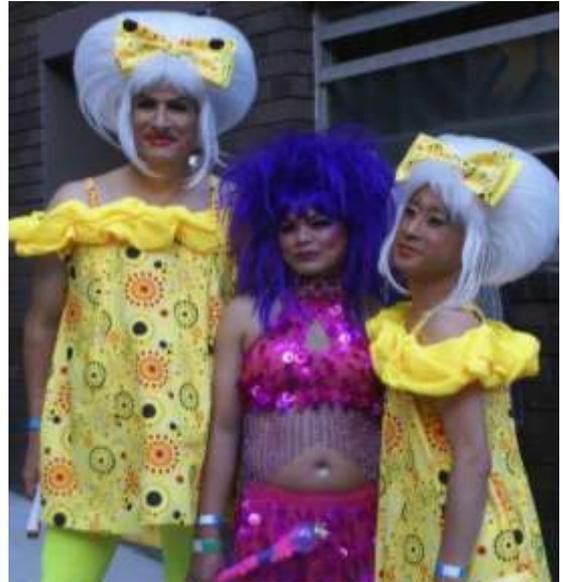


Suzie Wong,
Dame Dolly
& Cleopatra

The Parade Cont'd



Erroll & Jon resplendent in pink



The Yellow Beryls with Chai in purple

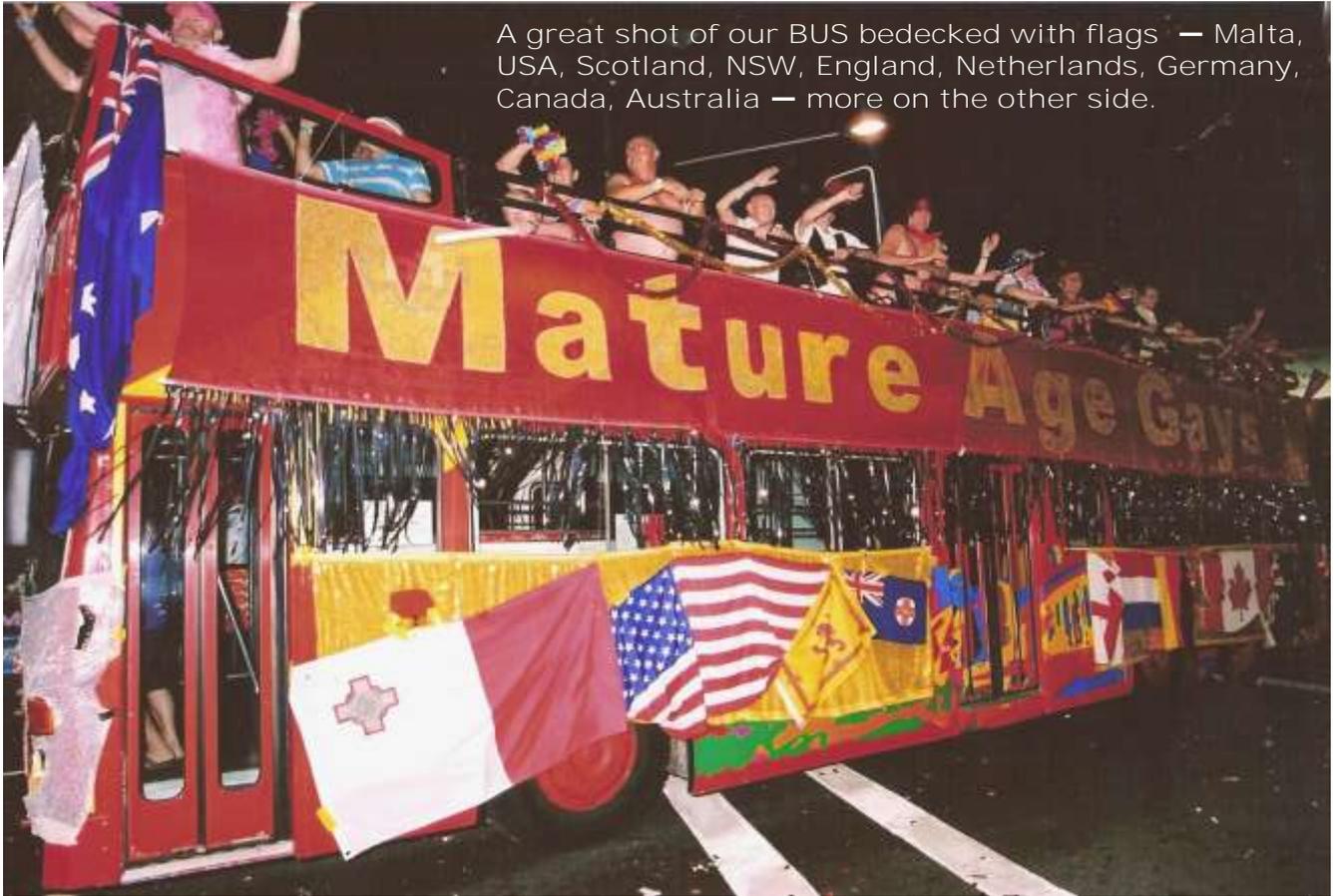


Two waiters give DDDM a drink love their hair do!

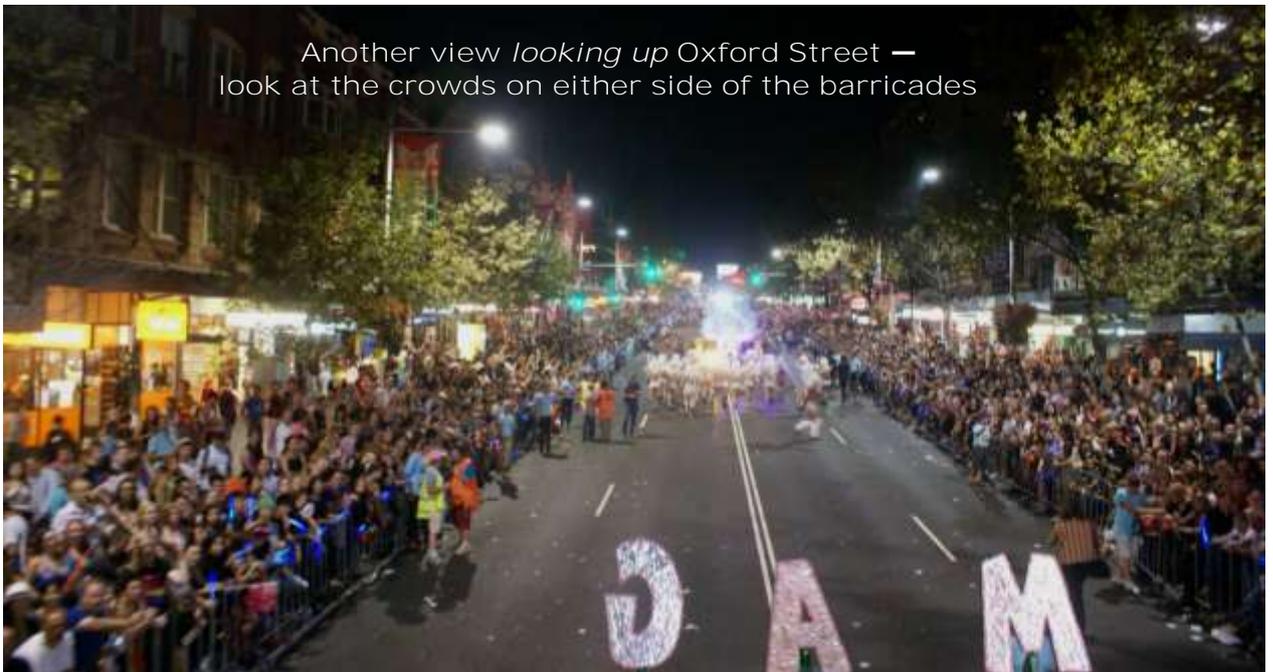


Cleopatra, Peter & Damian

This Issue of the MAGazine newsletter is for the months of April, May and June. The last issue for 2009 will be for November and December.



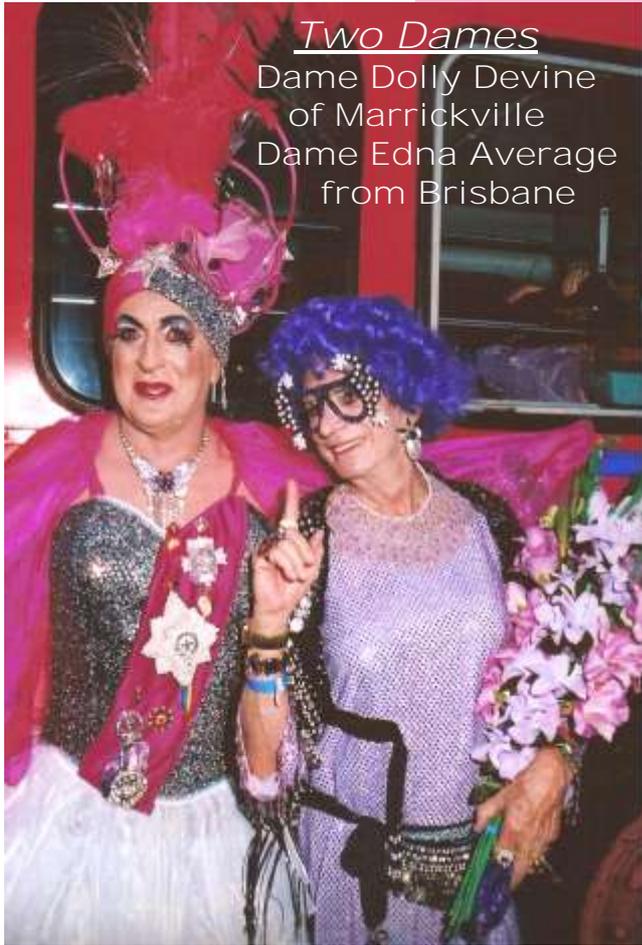
A great shot of our BUS bedecked with flags — Malta, USA, Scotland, NSW, England, Netherlands, Germany, Canada, Australia — more on the other side.



Another view *looking up* Oxford Street — look at the crowds on either side of the barricades

Disclaimer:

The opinions expressed in this Newsletter are those of individuals and do not necessarily reflect the policies of MAG or ACON.



Two Dames
Dame Dolly Devine
of Marrickville
Dame Edna Average
from Brisbane



Our two Zorros both had
large swords



Noel and Dame Edna both came
down from Brisbane to be with us



Noel, Caesar, DDDM, Colin, Graham
The bus in behind was the
Virgin Airlines Double Decker Bus

Fair Day
at Victoria Park
Broadway

MAGazine

Thank you to all those kind guys who donated a bottle of wine for the raffle — we raised over \$780 on the raffle which was won by Jon.
Your generosity is much appreciated!!



Jon and Harry selling home made Jams



Jon and Erroll sell some plants to a customer. **John O'Dea scratching his head** in the background.
John and Damian are also admiring the vast selection of plants we had for sale.



David from ACON with John [in yellow rain coat] discuss our stalls.

To all who supported us on Fair Day — a BIG thank you



John & Lorraine from NZ [this lovely couple very kindly donated a truck to transport the plants to Victoria Park]



Ken who created the wine bottle pyramid with DDDM



DDDM next to the wine bottle pyramid, in front of the raffle table. John s and John Go wait for customers to purchase tickets
DDDM = Dame Dolly Devine of Marrickville

ACON Housing Project

our philosophy...

Our philosophy is to provide all people living with HIV/AIDS as well as members of the broader Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender (GLBT) community with the advice and tools necessary to resolve housing and homelessness issues.

With your active participation, we help you to help yourself.

why is housing so important?

Safe secure housing means a roof over your head, a fridge to keep food fresh, a stove to cook a meal on and a place to invite friends and family. The NSW Department of Housing and Community Housing Services have a range of options that can help people on a low to moderate income find affordable housing. They can also help with bonds, related costs and assist you through periods of crisis with emergency or temporary accommodation.

how can ACON Housing help me?

ACON Housing Project supports people living with HIV/AIDS, and gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT) people who are on low incomes and experiencing health difficulties to find somewhere to live. We believe that safe, secure and affordable housing is essential to support the quality of life, health and independence of all people.

we can also help with...

- advice and assistance to apply for public and community housing
- representing your rights when dealing with other service providers
- up to five months accommodation in one of our ACON Houses – space permitting – for people living with or affected by HIV/AIDS while they await long term Priority Housing allocation with the NSW Department of Housing, or other Department of Housing initiatives.
- short-term emergency housing based on current availability
- answers about transfers from one Department of Housing (DOH) unit to another
- answers about the Special Assistance Subsidy – Special (SAS-S)
- referral to other organisations and services

what if I need help and support beyond housing?

If you become a client of the ACON Housing Project we can help you achieve your housing goals by writing with you a support plan. This support plan will break down the steps into achievable goals. We can assist you with onward referrals into supported accommodation services. If your request is not housing related we are able to refer you to other internal services within ACON or externally as required.

what if I need help fast?

If you find yourself needing help right way, call or send us an email and we will get in touch regarding your housing issues. We will answer your questions as promptly as possible. Our contact details are listed at the back of this brochure.

If you have a critical housing issue, we will endeavour to help you achieve a solution as quickly as possible.

- We can support you as you talk to services that can help to get a roof over your head quickly.
- We can liaise with other service providers to assist you to obtain emergency accommodation.
- We can also give you advice when dealing with the Department of Housing and help you decide if you meet their requirements.
- We can assist by talking with your landlord or housing provider if you find yourself in serious rent arrears.

what if I'm at risk because of violence or harassment?

ACON Housing helps people who are escaping domestic violence. We assist if you're being harassed by neighbours because of your sexuality or if you're a person living with HIV/AIDS. We can help you to apply for a transfer to a new Department of Housing property. We can also assist you by providing a support person at tribunal hearings or mediation sessions.

how to contact us



BUILDING OUR COMMUNITY'S
HEALTH & WELLBEING

T (02) 9206 2039, (02) 9206 2093, or
ACON Sydney Switchboard 9206 2000
Email: housing@acon.org.au
Our postal address is:
ACON Housing Project
PO Box 350, Darlinghurst 1300



FINANCIAL PLANNING — LONG TERM:

Dan was a single guy living at home with his father and working in the family business.

When he found out he was going to inherit a fortune when his sickly father died, he decided he needed a wife with which to share his fortune.

One evening at an investment meeting he spotted the most beautiful woman he had ever seen.

Her natural beauty took his breath away. "I may look like just an ordinary man," he said to her, "but in a few years, my father will die, and I'll inherit \$200 million."

Impressed, the woman obtained his business card and three days later, she became his stepmother.

SENIOR DATING

Ethel: "That nice Abner Ashworth asked me out for a date. I know you went with him last week, and I wanted to talk with you about him before I give him my answer."

Edna: 'Well, I'll tell you. He show up at my apartment punctually at 7pm, dressed like such a gentleman in a fine suit, and he brings me such beautiful flowers!

Then he takes me out for dinner ... A marvelous dinner ... lobster, champagne, dessert and after-dinner drinks. Then we go and see a show. Let me tell you, Ethel.

I enjoyed it so much I could have just died from pleasure!

So we are coming home back to my apartment and he turns into an ANIMAL.

Completely crazy, he tears off my expensive new dress and has his way with me TWO TIMES!

Ethel: "Goodness gracious! ... So you are telling me I shouldn't go out with him?"

Edna: 'No, no, no ... I'm just saying, wear an old dress!'

BLONDE INVASION

Q: How do you know when a blonde has been on the computer.

A: When you see white out on the screen!

There were two blondes sitting on the porch, one said, 'Which do you think is farther the moon or Florida?'

The other blonde replied, Uh can't see Florida.'

Warren's Poem

MAGazine

By Warren Sawkins
MAG MAGAZINE
POET
Written 6 February
2009

NEARLY A DECADE LATER.

Nearly a decade has passed, since I set you free.
You then to get on with and live your new life,
and me to look after me and, live the real me.
It is said, in sickness and in health,
death to we both parted.
Maybe it was death, before we started!

I often wonder why, I started a new life,
with another woman, eventually made her my wife.
What did I have in mind, why was I so blind!
To fall victim to a society life thinking play.

Where two actors, shouldn't have played, just left, not stay.

Ours a union not meant to be, unhappiness masked
not to see.

In all walks of life, in every living partnership.
There will be some form of husband and wife.
Adam and Eve or Adam and Steve.

**It doesn't matter what society may think or say,
There will always be out there, different lifestyles
that won't change or ever go away.**



MAGnet

MAGnet — is our mid week venue for mature gay and bi men.

Every Wednesday evening meeting at the Taxi Club, on Flinders Street, Darlinghurst, from 6:30pm for a meal. It is a great place to be at. We

recommend guys join the Taxi Club — **it's only \$11 per year** and you can enjoy all the benefits. MAG invites all mature age gay and bisexual men to join our guys in having a meal, a drink and socialising.

← Our Guest Speaker for the meeting on 25 April, which is ANZAC DAY, will be Sam Everingham. →

Sam is the author of the recently released Gordon Barton — **Australia's Maverick Entrepreneur (Allen & Unwin).**

As a political leader and millionaire businessman Barton had a high public profile in 1960s and 70s Australia. Behind closed doors, Barton had an unconventional S&M sex life. Sam is currently writing the biography of famed Sydney performance artist, clothes designer, painter and courtesan Madam Lash. A psychologist, author and research consultant, Sam discusses just what motivates him to write the lives of eccentric Australians and the ethical dilemmas faced in bringing to life the intimate private lives of his subjects.

Sam will also be bringing along a handful of books for sale on the night.

Remembering MAG in your Will.

Previous members have bequeathed a small amount of funds from their wills to MAG, following their passing.

We would be very honoured if members or friends of MAG may care to consider doing something similar.

2009 MAG Survey

MAGazine

Survey compiled by
Tony Wang

OVERVIEW

The MAG Annual Survey Report 2009 is produced based on previous surveys. There were seventy four valid respondents to the Survey this year.

Under the theme of "GETTING TO KNOW US 2009", the questionnaire layout involved five major categories and approximately forty questions, ranging from basic information, sex life and relationship to individual outlook and connection with MAG. Detailed data calculation and analysis are presented in the following respective sections.

Survey data was collated by Tony Wang. The report results objectively represents the survey. This report was presented by Steve Ostrow at the MAG meeting on Saturday, 14 March 2009.

AGE

The average age of the respondents is 64.4 years old, with the youngest being 24, and oldest 89. The majority of the members are in their 50s to 70s. The age group from 50 to 80 contributed to 82.2% of the entire survey samples.

ORIGIN, SEXUALITY, RESIDENCE AND EMPLOYMENT

64.86% (48/74) respondents were born in Australia, approximately half of whom are from Sydney, and 33.78% (25/74) were born overseas. A majority (94.59%) of them sexually identify as gay (70/74), and 5.41% (4/74) are recognised as bi-sexual. About 2/3 of the respondents live alone at the moment and 2/5 of them are employed. Two observations need to be added here. Firstly, out of 1/3 of respondents who live with someone, 54.17% (13/24) are living with their partners. Secondly, 17% of the respondents who are currently working at the moment indicate their jobs are part time or casual basis.

GENERAL HEALTH

The general health situation was based on respondents' own descriptions.

Majority of respondents (58%) consider their current health is good.

Further queries, however, show that 27 out of 74 (36.49%) respondents are suffering chronic illnesses and another 2 (2.7%) are living with a disability

1/3 of respondents had suicidal thoughts and most of them had expressed these thoughts to someone else. They found it helpful talking about it in almost all cases.

SEX LIFE

A high level of satisfaction with sex is witnessed among the group. 2/3 of respondents are satisfied with their sex life to some degree. Viagra usage is less than 1/3 among the respondents.

As to sexual attractions, the percentage of respondents attracted to younger individuals is slightly higher than other groups.

RELATIONSHIP

Relationship and marital status are shown in Table 4. There are more respondents in a relationship than there are respondents who are single.

Table 4 Relationships, Marriages and Children

	YES	NO
CURRENTLY IN A RELATIONSHIP	32 (43.24%)	42 (56.74%)
BEEN MARRIED	18 (24.32%)	56 (75.68%)
HAS CHILDREN	13 (17.57%)	60 (81.08%)

An average time of relationships is 13.53 years, with the longest being 53 years. And 43.75% (14/32) of the current relationships are long term relationships of more than five years.

CONNECTION WITH MAG

Average time of respondents coming to MAG meeting is 7.4 years.

There are six first timers and two second time visitors in the survey.

50% of the respondents have been coming to MAG for more than ten years.

Compared to those loyal members, there are equal numbers of people who are new to MAG (less than one year) and in medium acquaintance (one to five years).

The MAG website and newsletter are two of the main media used by members.

A vast majority of respondents have read newsletters through either mail or at the meetings. In contrast, only about 1/3 of respondents have seen the website due to no access to the Internet or lack of related information.

SUMMARY

- The average age of MAG members is approximately 64 years old. The majority age group is from 50 to 80.
- About 2/3 of MAG members live alone at the moment and 2/5 of the members are still working including on a part time or casual basis
- Nearly 3/5 of the members are in good health. 1/3 of the members are suffering chronic age related illnesses.
- A majority of members are sexually identified as gay (95%) and have satisfaction in their sex life (68%).
- There are nearly 15% more single members than the ones in a relationship. 44% of those current relationships are long term relationships.
- Average time of members coming to MAG meeting is about 7 years. There are new comers in almost every meeting.
- The popularity of MAG newsletters is nearly 90% among the members. In contrast, only 1/3 of the members have checked the MAG website.

For further enquiries regarding the report figures, statistical methodology and requirement for original data spreadsheet, please email tonyjajia@hotmail.com.

MAG sincerely thanks Tony for an absolutely fantastic job done in publishing the results of the 2009 MAG Survey.



MAG's Details

Executive Members:

President: Erroll Higson 9557 5903
Secretary: David Bowron 9516 2063
Treasurer: **John O'Dea** 9521 1953

ACON — Project Officer MAG
and the founder of MAG:
Steve Ostrow 9358 1460

Committee Members:

John Goosen 9982 7832
Damian Feresin 9798 8009
John Graham 9798 8009
Bradley Falappi 9550 6359
Ross MacKinnon —

MAGIC

MAG in the Community.
For guys who are ill, in hospital,
or who require assistance. Please
contact Noel Hunter on (02)
96991317.

Our postal address is:

**MAG PO Box 350
DARLINGHURST NSW 1300**

Web site is magnsw.org.

MAG meetings are held at:

Lower Ground Floor
ACON Building
9-25 Commonwealth Street,
Darlinghurst

The entrance is at the back of
the building, on the corner
of Clarke and Alberta Streets.
We meet of the second and
last Saturdays of each month,
from 6:30 pm for tea & coffee
with the meeting commencing
at 7:00pm, usually with a
Guest Speaker — sometimes
we'll have a social evening,
A light supper follows.

The Executive Committee
meets on the second Saturday
of the month after the General
Meeting.

Editor — David 9516 2063

COMMUNITY CONTACTS

Acceptance (Gay Catholics) Tel. 9568 4433.
Friday Mass, St. Josephs Church, Bedford Street,
Newtown, 8pm.

Aleph Australia for gay Jews & friends,
Contact *Michael* 9300 9700.

Asian Project Contact Solomon 9206 2080
bgay Community News
Contact Marc on 0404112831.

Country Network a national social network of
gay men. Sydney Metro contact is Neil Maguire on
9547 1258.

Cronulla Gay Group
Contact John 9528 9158 or Eric 9589 1161.

Cross Section for gays within the Uniting
Church phone *Des* 9319 0722.

GAMMA Gay & Married Men's Assoc
Meets on 1st & 3rd Wed every month,
at 9 C'wealth St, Surry Hills. Tel. 9267 4000
www.gamma.org.au

Gaydownunder www.gaydownunder.com
GLCS Tel. 1800 184 527

GSN - Gay Sydney Nudists
contact *Tony James* 49725357.

MCC Good Shepherd 6:30pm Sundays
Pastor *Robert Clark* Tel. 9386 9293
37 East Street, Granville.

MCC Sydney 10:00am & 6:30pm Sundays
Pastor *Gavin Ward* Tel. 9569 5122
96 Crystal Street, Petersham.

PFLAG Parents, Families & Friends of Lesbians &
Gays. www.pflagaustralia.org

SCOG Southern Cross Outdoor Group:
bushwalks and other outdoor activities in the
Sydney area. Contact *John* 9907 9144.
Email address is scog@scog.asn.au

SPAI DS Dates on tree planting days contact
josken@zipworld.com.au for further information.

Independent Catholic Church of Aust
Meetings: fortnightly at 320 Riley Street,
Surry Hills. Contact: Father Peter
on 9588 6893 or 0419 464 353

WAGS 1st and 3rd Saturdays of month
ACON, 13 Ellen Street, Wollongong
7:00pm till 9:00pm.

There is no supper. www.wags.net.au
Apostolic Community of St Nicholas
Meeting: 1st Sunday of the month at 11am
10/5-6 Edgar Cres, Belfield
Community Pastor Alexei G Schmidt
9642 7881.