



NEWSLETTER

May 2025

Editorial

Blue Mountains Pride is fast approaching with events from Friday 6 to Sunday 8 June.

The Mountains are blazing with autumn colour as the trees prepare for winter. Soon it will be the fireplaces that will be blazing with warmth as the temperatures outside drop. It will be time to don that warm coat and scarf.

Blue Mountains Pride offers a smorgasbord of events to excite you during the King's Birthday June long weekend, and beyond. Check out all the details in the rest of the newsletter.

The Blue Mountains also offers plenty of other attractions. The newly opened [Grand Cliff Top Walk](#), [Scenic World](#) or the wineries in the Megalong Valley now the road repairs have been completed. There are plenty of restaurants, cafes, wine bars and breweries to enjoy throughout our gorgeous towns.

Also coming up in the Blue Mountains are IDAHOBIT on 17 May, and [Holding the Man](#) by Glenbrook Players from 23 May.

Some of the Blue Mountains Pride events are selling fast, so if you are planning on attending we recommend that you buy your tickets soon.

We look forward to celebrating Pride with you in the Blue Mountains.

Blue Mountains Pride takes place on the traditional the lands of the Dharug and Gundungurra people. We pay our respects to their elders past and present.

Events

bentART Exhibition

Rex-Livingstone Gallery, Katoomba
Launch: Friday 6 June (invite only)
Exhibition: 10am to 5pm, 7 to 14 June
10am to 2pm, 15 June
Artist Talks: 3pm to 5pm, 7 June

GLBTQ+ Bushwalk

Bush Lemons
10am, Saturday 7 June
Ngula Bulgarabang Regional Park

Blackheath Disco

Three Sisters Social Group
7pm to midnight, Saturday 7 June
Blackheath Community Centre, Blackheath

Clothes Swap

Trans and Gender Diverse Blue Mountains
10:30am to 3pm, Sunday 8 June
Mid Mountains Community Centre, Lawson

Village Walking Tour

2:30pm to 4:30pm, Sunday June 8
Katoomba

Young Frankenstein

3pm, Sunday 8 June
Mount Vic Flicks, Mt Victoria

Thriller the Soirée

Three Sisters Social Group
5pm to 9pm, Sunday 8 June
Victoria and Albert Guesthouse, Mt Victoria

Pride



Blue Mountains Pride is one of many Pride festivals around the world. June is Pride month, commemorating the Stonewall Riot in June 1969 in New York City, and, in Australia, the first Mardi Gras in June 1978.

In the early hours of 28 June 1969 the police raided the Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village, New York, a regular occurrence. Rather than line up and allow the police to verify the sex of the female patrons, arresting any trans women or drag queens, the patrons resisted the police. The community had had enough of the raids and arrests. A crowd quickly gathered, and violence broke out. Garbage cans, bottles and rocks were thrown. Fires were started. It escalated to a full-scale riot with more police arriving. ([Wikipedia](#))

On 24 June 1978 the Gay Solidarity Group organised a parade after a day of solidarity activities in Sydney. A small crowd with a sound system on a flat-bed truck gathered in Taylor Square, some wearing fun outfits. They proceeded down Oxford Street with lesbians and gay men from the bars joining in. They were headed to Hyde Park. At College Street the police confiscated the truck. The crowd was diverted and headed to the Cross. Once there they started to disperse, but the police had blocked off Darlinghurst Road and started arresting people. Again, it turned into a riot with 53 people arrested. ([78ers](#))

Pride is our response to the long oppression of LGBTQIA+ people, galvanised by such events. Rather than shamefully hiding our sexuality and gender identity from the world, we take pride in being ourselves. We celebrate our Pride in public displays such as the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade. We make ourselves visible to promote awareness and acceptance.

In Australia we have fought for and obtained many rights since the riots. Laws making gay sex illegal were repealed in NSW in 1984, and eventually in Tasmania in 1997 after a complaint to the United Nations. Anti-discrimination laws were progressively passed in the states, and federally in 2013. Federal laws recognising same sex relationships were passed in 2009, and full marriage equality in 2017 after a postal survey. This was despite the Howard government in 2004 amending the law to only allow marriage between a man and a woman. ([Wikipedia](#))

Rights for transgender people in Australia are more recent, allowing drivers licenses and passports to be amended to reflect gender identity. Non-binary genders are being allowed on official documents. Medical treatment can be difficult to obtain. We still have a long way to go.

Homosexuality is illegal in many parts of the world, with 6 countries imposing the death penalty. Recent changes in USA have revoked many rights, especially for trans people. Culture wars around the world are making it more difficult for LGBTQIA+ people. ([Wikipedia](#))

Blue Mountains Pride builds on this foundation and celebrates how far we have come, while reflecting on those places that are not as fortunate as Australia. We honour the sacrifices of those who fought for our rights, and create a safe place for people to discover their authentic selves.



IDAHOBIT



10am to 12pm Saturday 17 May



*Progress Pride flag display on the Cultural Centre forecourt at IDAHOBIT celebrations 17 May 2024.
Photo by Liam Foster.*

Blue Mountains City Council will raise the Progress Pride flag and hold a free community event to celebrate the International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Interphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) on Saturday 17 May.

The event will be held from 10am to 12pm in the Tibbi Whalan Hall, Katoomba Civic Centre, with speeches from Blue Mountains Mayor Cr Mark Greenhill and members of the Blue Mountains LGBTQIA+ community, stalls, morning tea and a chill out space.

IDAHOBIT is celebrated internationally on 17 May, the anniversary of the World Health Organisation removing homosexuality from the International Classification of Diseases in 1990.

Blue Mountains City Council is one of the few Australian councils committed to flying the Pride flag annually on 17 May in support of IDAHOBIT and the LGBTQIA+ community more broadly.

Blue Mountains Mayor Mark Greenhill said, "Flying the flag sends a strong message of the value and respect the Blue Mountains holds LGBTQIA+ residents and visitors in, and reinforces we will never tolerate acts of discrimination, hatred or intimidation in our community.

"The theme for IDAHOBIT 2025 is 'The Power of Communities'. Community is one of the most valuable things we experience in life. Strong communities make us feel safe and included and creating vibrant community has immense social and cultural benefits for us all."

For more information see [BMCC](#).



bentART Exhibition

Launch: Friday 6 June (invite only)

Exhibition: 10am to 5pm 7 to 14 June, 10am to 2pm 15 June



With the King's Birthday Weekend and our 20th Anniversary Exhibition on the horizon, the mounting crispness in the air mirrors our growing sense of anticipation.

bentART is a national art prize which was established in the Blue Mountains in 2005 to celebrate works in the visual arts of Australian lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, asexual and other sexually or gender diverse (LGBTIQA+) artists.

Entries officially closed on 30 April, and we're thrilled to announce we received an incredible 121 individual artworks—a stunning testament to the talent within our community.

Behind the scenes, the bentART team is in full swing, ensuring every detail is just right for what promises to be a spectacular Opening Night on 6 June and exhibition. To all our wonderful artists, we look forward to celebrating your work on opening night.

And to our broader community, don't miss the Artist Talks on Saturday 7 June from 3pm—this promises to be an inspiring afternoon.

This year, in collaboration with Blackheath Art Society, bentART is pleased to present a series of creative workshops designed to inspire and engage. Most of our art workshops will be held at the Blackheath Art Society premises in Blackheath. Everyone is welcome, and we've included two youth-focused sessions especially for our younger creatives! Book your workshops [here](#).

Don't forget to visit the exhibition at Rex-Livingston Gallery in Katoomba, open every day from 7 to 15 June.



bentART Workshops



bentART Art Workshops - June 2025

bentART is thrilled to offer a dynamic series of art workshops in collaboration with expert tutors from Blackheath Art Society

Explore painting, printmaking, and even playful clay sessions for kids and adults—you are sure to find something that excites you.

Join us in a fun, inclusive space to create, connect, and celebrate the vibrancy of our queer community.



7 June 10am—12pm
Life Drawing Fundamentals (Adults)



8 June 10—11.30am Clay Workshop (12-15yr)
1—2.30pm Clay Workshop (16-18yrs)



10 June 10am—12pm Clay Workshop



13 June 10am—12pm Gelli Printing Workshop



13 June 10am—12pm Plein Air Workshop



15 June 10am—12pm
Expressive Life Drawing (Adults)



Tickets at Humanitix:

Members \$50
Non Members \$55
Children of Members \$45
Children of Non Members \$50

www.bentart.com.au/workshops

GLBTQ+ Bushwalk

10am Saturday 7 June



Join us for this bushwalk as part of the Kings Birthday weekend festivities!

Hosted by Bush Lemons. All welcome (including dogs on leads)!

We will walk the old fire trails and tracks at **Ngula Bulgarabang Regional Park**, just outside Katoomba, and end up at the Megalong Head Lookout for morning tea, with its beautiful views over the Megalong Valley. The fire trails make this easy walking and there is a short but fairly easy walk down a single file track to the lookout. All up the walk will be about 6km.

This area was bought from private ownership by the State Government in 2019 and the regional park was created to keep it safe for the animals and plants, walkers, rock climbers and explorers. It is the last remaining undeveloped peninsula-plateau in the upper Blue Mountains. It has a huge variety of flora and fauna, tall eucalypt forests, significant Aboriginal heritage, as well as the beautiful views.

Meet: 10am on Saturday, 7 June, at the locked gate at the end of Pulpit Hill Road (turn off the highway at the Explorers Tree).

Bring: Some drinking water, a snack for morning tea, appropriate footwear. And please, wear your rainbow finery! Scarves, feather boas, shimmery shorts etc!!



Book: It's a good idea to book in for the walk in case it gets cancelled or changed due to the weather: **Jocelyn - bushscout@bigpond or 0414 572991**

This will be a nice leisurely walk so you will still have enough energy to visit the Bent Art Exhibition in Katoomba afterwards, and also to boogie the night away at the Three Sisters Blackheath Disco on Saturday night!

For more information see our [website](#).



Blackheath Disco

7pm to midnight, Saturday 8 June



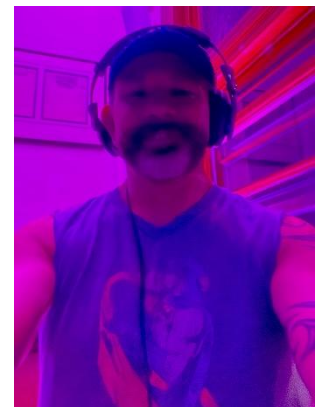
The Blackheath Disco is Back in Blackheath this year. Not only will there be more space on the dance floor and more tables, but we have added a cloakroom and a chill out space. Otherwise, it will be the same friendly and inclusive event with great music.

Dj sh0rty will again be getting you dancing and keeping you on the floor with tunes from the disco greats through to the current hits. Dj sh0rty has been spinning the discs for us at the Disco for many years. He has also played at many other events including during Mardi Gras and World Pride. Listen to his [latest mix](#) to get you in the mood.



Denise Hanlon is an award-winning singer, a professional comedienne and an experienced emcee. The great thing is – she can do all 3 at once! A talented singer, it just wouldn't be Denise if her singing wasn't interspersed with her colourful costume, quick one-liners and often involuntary audience participation. Denise will be bringing us two great shows.

Tickets are \$35+bf [online](#) and \$45 at the door. Tickets are selling fast, so get your tickets now.



The event is BYO: bring your own drink, bring your own banquet, bring your own dancing shoes. Our snack bar will have water, soft drinks and great snacks available. The Trans and Gender Diverse Community will be running a cloakroom for a gold coin donation.

The event is an LGBTQIA+ safe space. It is inclusive. Everyone is welcome. Younger people should be accompanied by an adult.

See our [website](#) for details.



Clothes Swap

10:30am to 3pm, Sunday 8 June



Trans and Gender Diverse Blue Mountains are excited for our upcoming clothes swap to celebrate Pride Month. Our clothes swap is a safe and welcoming space to come and try some new gender affirming clothing styles, donate some old clothes for someone else to enjoy and be with community. Join us for soup, snacks, tea and coffee on us.

We welcome all Transgender, Gender Diverse, Gender questioning people and their friends and families to come along.

The event will be held on Sunday the 8th of June at Mid Mountains Community Centre, 3-7 New St, Lawson. 10.30am to 3pm.

If you have clothing to donate, please keep to one bag of clean and good quality clothing. No underwear please (with the exception of clean, good quality binders and bras). Either bring donations on the day, contact Gaby on 0411092970, our group email bluemountainstgd@gmail.com or one of the co organisers through our Facebook page: Trans and Gender Diverse Blue Mountains.



Village Walking Tour

2:30pm, Sunday 8 June

Local historian Sue Collins has crafted something special just for us—a guided walk through the heart of Katoomba, sharing the rich stories and hidden histories of our town.

Join our LGBTQIA+ community for the Katoomba Story Village Walking Tour, and afterwards, unwind with cocktails at the iconic Carrington Hotel.

It's a beautiful way to connect, celebrate, and experience Katoomba together.



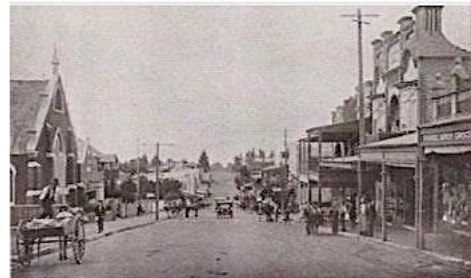
King's Birthday Long Weekend – Village Walking Tour

**Come take a stroll with our LGBTQIA+ community on the
Katoomba Story Village Walking Tour,
then unwind with a drink at the historic Carrington Hotel.**

Sunday, June 8 at 2:30 PM

*Bring your friends, meet new ones, and make a day of it.
Tickets are limited – book yours now!*

Hosted by Sue Collins



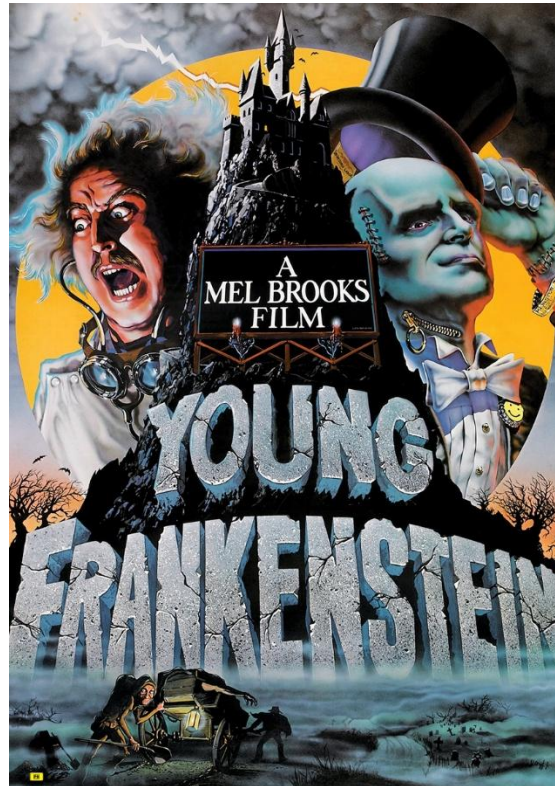
Tickets are available through [Eventbrite](#).



Young Frankenstein

3pm, Sunday 8 June

Make Sunday a Science Fiction Double Feature, starting with Young Frankenstein and then joining the Three Sisters Social Group around the corner at Thriller the Soirée.



Join us for a special 50th anniversary special screening of Young Frankenstein. Made with obvious affection for the original, Mel Brooks' Young Frankenstein is a riotously silly spoof featuring a fantastic performance by Gene Wilder. Arrive early for a real old time treat with resident organist Wendy Hambly, playing the theatre organ before the film!

Respected medical lecturer Dr. Frederick Frankenstein learns that he has inherited his infamous grandfather's estate in Transylvania. Arriving at the castle, Dr. Frankenstein soon begins to recreate his grandfather's experiments with the help of servants Igor, Inga and the fearsome Frau Blücher. After he creates his own monster, new complications ensue with the arrival of the doctor's fiancée, Elizabeth.

Staring Gene Wilder, Madeline Kahn and Marty Feldman.

Details and tickets from [Mount Vic Flicks](#).

Thriller the Soirée

5pm to 9pm, Sunday 8 June



The event to end all events. A little too dramatic? Perhaps, but Thriller the Soirée is the final event of our Kings Birthday Blue Mountains Pride Long Weekend. Perfect timing for a post Pride wrap-up.

Thriller is the successor to the Mountain Ball hosted by the Three Sisters Social Group and others since 1981. Thriller will provide the opportunity to celebrate our success in showcasing the LGBTIQA+ communities extensive artistic talents. A prize for the best person in theme will be awarded.

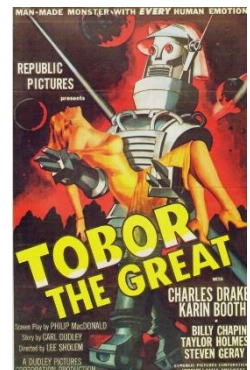
Thriller will be an ode to shlock from, but not limited to, such luminaries as Mary Shelley (Frankenstein 1818), Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde (silent movie 1920), the pantheon of 1950s sci-fi/horror movies, and more recent movie offerings such as Barbarella, Rocky Horror, Young Frankenstein and the Fifth Element.

*This is thriller, thriller night
'Cause I can thrill you more
Than any ghoul would ever dare try
Thriller,, thriller night*

The amazing Victoriana adorned Victoria and Albert Guesthouse in Mt Victoria provides an appropriate backdrop for our final celebration of the Blue Mountains Pride Kings Birthday Long Weekend. It would be nice if the VandA was haunted; just for that night.

The Soirée is guaranteed to be a thrilling evening with music from Dj sh0rty and entertainment by Ms Robyn Banks. You will be presented with a sparkling beverage on arrival and invited to partake of a sumptuous buffet. You may even get to dance with that stunning beauty.

Tickets are \$109+bf and available from [TryBooking](https://www.trybooking.com/CZYFD). See our [website](https://www.threesisterssocial.asn.au/soiree/) for further details.



Blue Mountains Pride



Blue Mountains Pride was formed in 2024 to coordinate the activities of the LGBTQIA+ groups in the NSW Blue Mountains over the King's Birthday long weekend. Since this coincides with Pride Month and Pride festivals around the world, we felt it was the perfect name for the group.



The community groups that form Blue Mountains Pride are bentART, Bush Lemons, Blue Mountains IDAHOBIT, PFLAG Blue Mountains, Three Sisters Social Group and Trans and Gender Diverse Blue Mountains. Activities are run by the individual groups.

There has been a long history of LGBTQIA+ groups and activities in the Blue Mountains.

The Mountaineers held their first Black and White Ball in 1981 at Springwood. More than 40 Balls were held over the years organised by The Mountaineers, then GAGS (Garden and Gourmet Society) and Three Sisters Social Group. The Soirée is the successor to Ball and is the place to be on the Sunday night.

bentART celebrates 20 years this year. Starting in 2005 its annual exhibitions was held in the Katoomba Leura Community Centre. It then moved to Wentworth Falls

School of Arts, where the launch on the Friday night became a major event in itself. It has since moved back to the heart of Katoomba at the Rex-Livingstone Art+Objects Gallery. The smaller space limits the numbers who are able to attend the launch. Over the years it has featured hundreds of queer artists from the Blue Mountains and around Australia.

Bush Lemons started their bushwalks in 1996 with a walk most weekends. While the group usually is for women, the bushwalk on the long weekend is a fun and inclusive event where people are invited to dress in rainbow finery. All GLBTQ+ are welcome.

In 1991 the AIDS Memorial Project created a living memorial for many of the 250 people of the Blue Mountains community who succumbed to AIDS. It was created in Medlow Bath. Three Sisters Social Group has become the custodian of the memorial. After many years of neglect the memorial was reimagined and revitalized. It was dedicated in December 2022.

Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [BlueSky](#) or hashtag #BlueMountainsPride. Email us at bluemountainspride@gmail.com.



AIDS Memorial, Medlow Bath Park

