

# Biographies of Interviewees

The research for this text included a series of in-depth interviews, conducted by the author during 2004–05, with people who were involved with the AIDS movement and/or HIV/AIDS policy making during the 1980s and 1990s. Interview transcripts were also sourced from the National Library of Australia Oral History Project 'Australia's Response to AIDS', with permission granted by the interviewees as required.

Face-to-face, in-depth interviews were conducted with the following people.

## Dennis Altman

Dennis Altman is an academic and activist who has written extensively on HIV/AIDS in both Australia and the United States. Altman was in the United States for much of the early 1980s, but upon returning to Melbourne in the later part of the decade was involved with the establishment of the Victorian AIDS Council.

## Bill Bowtell

Bill Bowtell was Chief of Staff and Chief Political Advisor to the Australian Minister for Health, Dr Neal Blewett, from April 1983 (beginning four weeks after the Labor Government had been elected and Blewett had been appointed Health Minister). Bowtell worked in this position until 1987. Bowtell was also well connected to the gay community and community AIDS organisations.

## Phil Carswell

Phil Carswell was the founding President of the Victorian AIDS Council (VAC). He has spent more than 15 years working in the AIDS sector and was the first openly gay man to work at the Victorian Health Department when he joined as a program officer in the department's first AIDS section. Throughout this period, Carswell was also active in the community, helping to establish the AIDS Trust and the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations, working with the AIDS Memorial Quilt and continuing his involvement with the VAC. He was a foundation member of the National Advisory Council on AIDS, representing the VAC.

## Levinia Crooks

Levinia Crooks is a psychologist who became involved in the AIDS movement in the mid-1980s through her work on a research project that was looking at the care and support needs of people living with HIV. She has also been involved with the AIDS Council of NSW and was the first executive officer for the National Association of People Living With AIDS. Crooks is currently the Executive Officer of the Australian Society for HIV Medicine and has longstanding involvement with the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation.

## Ken Davis

*Ken Davis* has been a gay liberation activist since 1973 and has been active politically around AIDS issues since the early 1980s, though his involvement with the union movement, his work in the Commonwealth Public Service and through various AIDS organisations including the AIDS Council of NSW (ACON), where he worked from 1987 to 1994. He has been international programs manager with APHEDA - Union Aid Abroad since 1994.

## David Lowe

David Lowe was a participant in both the community and the government response to HIV/AIDS in Australia. He was involved with the AIDS Action Committee in Sydney, which later became the AIDS Council of NSW. He also worked as Community Liaison and Conciliation Officer with the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board in the mid-1980s before moving into the newly established AIDS Bureau in the NSW Health Department as a Senior Policy Analyst in 1987. Lowe later became Director of the NSW AIDS Bureau—a position he held until the mid-1990s.

## Professor David Plummer AM

Professor David Plummer has been involved with the AIDS response in Australia since 1983 as a medical physician and community activist. Plummer was the first National President of the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations. He was also a long-serving member of the peak ministerial advisory body, the Australian National Council on AIDS, Hepatitis C and Related Diseases. Plummer was actively involved in the establishment of the Victorian AIDS Council and the Gay Men's Community Health Centre.

## Ian Rankin

Ian Rankin has been involved in AIDS politics since the early 1990s. He is a former president of the AIDS Action Council of the ACT (1995–97), former convener of People Living With HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) in the Australian Capital Territory, former President of the National Association of People Living With HIV/AIDS (1997–98), and Convener of PLWHA ACT. He is currently a member of the ACT Sexual Health, HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C and Related Diseases Ministerial Advisory Council and President of the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations.

## Prue Power

Prue Power was an advisor on health policy to the Minister for Health, Housing and Community Services, Brian Howe, from 1990 to 1992. She oversaw the implementation of the Baume Review into pharmaceutical access in Australia.

## Bill Whittaker

Bill Whittaker is a long-term activist. Prior to his involvement with HIV politics, Whittaker was President of the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras. He then went on to the position of executive director of the AIDS Council of NSW and was a founding member of the National Association of People Living With HIV/AIDS. He was also involved in the establishment of the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations.

One interviewee wished to remain anonymous. This person is a medical doctor with a long professional history in HIV medicine.

Interview transcripts sourced from the National Library of Australia Oral History Archives are listed below.

## Dennis Altman

(As above.)

## Professor Peter Baume

Professor Peter Baume is the former head of the School of Public Health at the University of New South Wales and former Liberal Senator for New South Wales. In the mid-1990s, Professor Baume chaired a review into the Therapeutic Goods Administration, which had direct relevance for emerging HIV therapies.

## Don Baxter

Don Baxter is a community activist. He is a former president and executive director of the AIDS Council of NSW. He is currently the Executive Director of the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations.

## Bruce Brown

Bruce Brown was an American activist who came to Australia from San Francisco in the mid-1980s. Brown was instrumental in the establishment of the first Australian chapter of AIDS-activist group the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power.

## Victor Carroll

Victor Carroll is a former editor of the *Sydney Morning Herald*. In this interview, Carroll discusses the *Herald's* reporting on the gay movement in Sydney.

## Professor John Dwyer

Professor John Dwyer is the Clinical Director of the Prince of Wales Hospital and was a member of the National Advisory Committee on AIDS in the 1980s.

## Steven Mark

Steven Mark is a lawyer and former President of the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board.

## Jennifer Ross

Jennifer Ross is the former Executive Director of the Haemophilia Foundation of Australia. Mrs Ross was a foundation member of the National Advisory Council on AIDS in the 1980s.

## Terry Thorley

Terry Thorley is a former national coordinator of the Australian Quilt Project.