

# Tasmania's Battle-Hardened Reformers

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## AUSTRALIA

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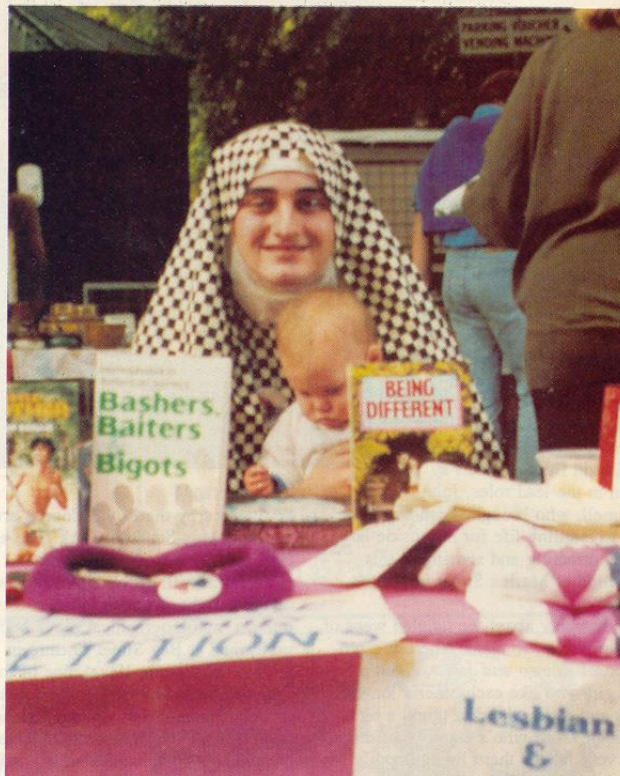
Sister Dolby Decibel of the Order of the Pink Thylacines and seven-month-old Jessie Booth are two of Tasmania's seasoned gay law reform campaigners.

They have both been involved in the fight to let the Tasmanian Gay and Lesbian Rights Group keep their stall at Hobart's Salamanca Markets.

Sister Dolby was among the first to be arrested during confrontations with police following an order that the stall be removed.

Jessie, too, was "arrested" after being detained with her lesbian Quaker mother Lee Guren.

When asked by *Campaign* to comment on the sudden collapse of the Hobart City Council's most recent attempt to ban the stall, the couple just looked at each other and laughed.



### Police gay phone-in yields six calls

The latest police gay violence phone-in attracted just six calls, and only three of those required any advice on action - one on discrimination, and two about attacks.

Fred Miller, of the NSW Police-Gay Liaison Unit, blamed a busy news week in the lead up to the phone-in and the reach of the Streetwatch programme for the low response.

"It was disappointing," Miller said.

Publicity for the third phone-in since 1985 had been limited to radio stations and local and metropolitan press. No television station promoted the story and the Sydney Morning Herald failed to include the telephone number.

Cameras and headlines were largely fixed on the shooting of a police officer and the death of an innocent man during a raid in connection with that shooting.

Miller added that a lot of people may have already reported violent incidents to the ongoing Streetwatch programme.

He said another phone-in may be held in 18 months.

### De Wylde "thrilled" with vote result

Toye de Wylde, Queensland's first openly gay political candidate, has told *Campaign* that she was "thrilled" with her result in the Merthyr by-election held on May 13. De Wylde was one of eight candidates who contested the inner-Brisbane seat vacated by discredited former National Party Minister, Don "Shady" Lane.

De Wylde polled 3.5 per cent, outpolling the Australian Democrats and gambling boss Gerry Bellino.

"I'm very pleased with the progress we've made politically," De Wylde said, "We've learned a lot from this campaign."

De Wylde had between 60 and 70 supporters staffing 13 of the 22 polling booths. There were no incidents and a number of voters willingly took her how-to-vote cards.

At the close of counting on election night, De Wylde had 517 votes, which she believed would climb to almost 600 when absentees and postals were included. While 42 per cent of these votes were cast in New Farm (the riverside Brisbane suburb popular with many gays) De Wylde was pleased that she also attracted support in the conservative blue ribbon suburbs of Ascot and Hamilton and in working class Woolowin and Windsor.

She said that the other parties complimented her workers on the professionalism of her campaign. Queensland Labor leader Wayne Goss "made a point" of collecting her three policy statements on polling day, while another senior Labor official invited her to join the Labor Party. She has also been invited to address a National Party branch on the Gold Coast.

De Wylde said she would again be a candidate in the state election expected at the end of this year.