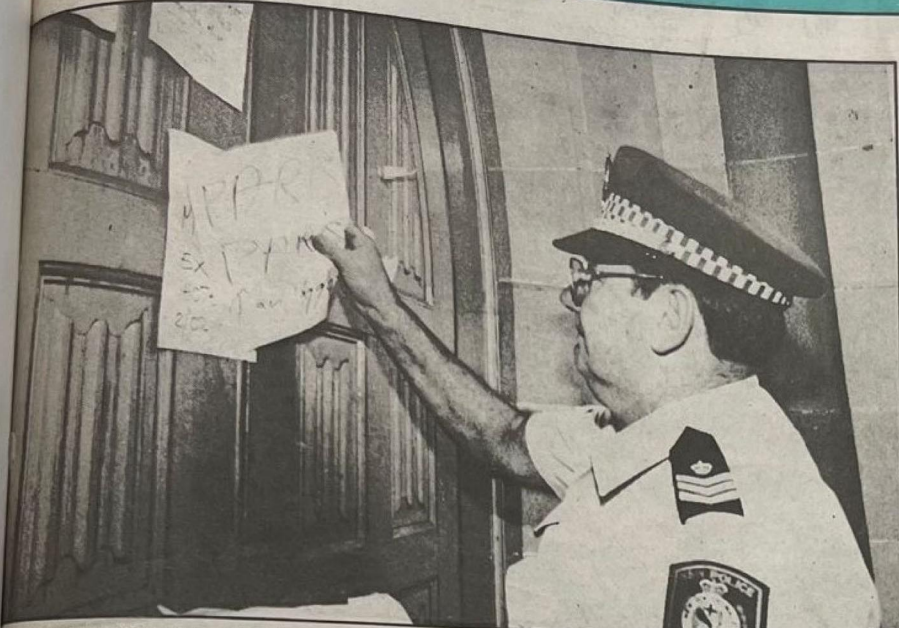


# SYDNEY STAR OBSERVER

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WEDNESDAY  
FORTNIGHTLY

No. 126, Friday 9 March 1990



Festival of Light's front door: a policeman removes accounts of gay bashings, put up by marchers who've been beaten up. Organisers of a rally against violence claim the Festival of Light's homophobic propaganda increases violence ...

## STOP THE BASHERS!

About 600 gays and lesbians marched through Sydney's streets to protest against the rising tide of anti gay violence.

The new levels of cooperation between police and gays, said the incident was regrettable.

Bashings have resulted in three murders in the past three months.

"It's a pity we didn't know about it first, because we could have negotiated it with the police."

The rally, called by the Gay and Lesbian Rights Lobby, began at Lang Park in the city, opposite Scots Church - home of the Festival of Light.

"Apparently it's an offence under the Summary Offences Act to stick anything on a church building."

Speakers told the crowd that violence was inflamed by anti gay propaganda from fundamentalist groups like the Festival of Light.

Later the rally moved off through Sydney streets to its finishing point at Taylor Square - past dozens of bemused Japanese honeymooners and several loud, obscene and homophobic men.

People who had been bashed were asked to write their names and the location of their assault on paper, and sellotape them to a wrought iron gate outside the Festival of Light offices.

In Elizabeth Street a vocal and angry heckler driving a utility truck punched a young gay man after being blown a kiss.

Scores of them did so but an obviously angry policeman, after ordering television news crews away, tore down many of the papers down. Only *Star Observer* photographer Jamie Dunbar recorded the policeman's action.

Sue Thompson has appealed for the young man to come forward so police could investigate the alleged assault and possibly lay charges.

After removing some of the notices, the policeman retreated and the notices were rewritten and replaced.

Later, organisers said the rally had been a significant step in increasing the determination of the gay and lesbian community to end the bashings, and alerting the wider community about the issue.

Police Gay Client Consultant Sue Thompson, who had addressed the rally on

"A real cross section was there," Rights Lobby co-convenor Bruce Grant said.

# VIOLENCE: POLICE, GOVT ACT



But despite his best efforts, they soon went back up.



Later, the protestors marched from the city to Taylor Square, demanding an end to the violence.

SW police and the state government have begun a new campaign of action to tackle the rising level of anti gay violence. 38 bashings, all believed to be gay related, have been reported to Surry Hills and Kings Cross police in the past three months. But police believe these

represent only a fraction of the assaults which have taken place. There have also been three gay related murders in Sydney and the central coast in as many months. Four inner city police stations now have officers specially assigned to receive and coordinate reports of gay bashings. The stations are Surry

Hills, Kings Cross, Paddington and Newtown. The initiative was ordered by the commander of the Sydney region, Executive Chief Superintendent Alf Peate, after a meeting between gay and lesbian community leaders and senior inner city police. People who have just

been bashed should still ring the emergency 000 number, or 2 0966 - particularly if there is any immediate chance of arresting the offenders. But the specially assigned police at the four inner city stations will handle less urgent reports, and any informa-

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### INSIDE: VOTING GAY plus ARMISTEAD MAUPIN