

Launch of the 2011 Darwin Pride Festival

Speech by

Her Honour the Honourable Sally Thomas AM

Administrator of the Northern Territory

Happy Yess, Browns Mart, 18 November 2011

- The Honourable Gerry McCarthy, Minister for Arts and Museums

Committee Members, distinguished guests all of you welcome to the launch of the 2011 Darwin Pride Festival!

I wish to extend my respect to the traditional owners of these lands and I thank Gary Lang for his welcome to country.

Ladies and gentlemen it is an honour to be invited to participate in this event. I have only just begun my term of office and I am very happy that one of my first official duties will be to launch your festival this evening.

The Darwin Pride festival is a cultural celebration of the Gay, Lesbian, Transgender and Bisexual community in Darwin and the Northern Territory.

There are a range of events spanning nine days. The program includes Barefoot Bowls, Pride Film Night, 'The SistaGirls Derailed', a Tranny and Trivia Game Show Night, parties, dancing and art events, and concludes with a Rainbow Family Fun Day. There is something for everyone. There is an opportunity for all in the community to participate.

I take this opportunity to recognise the hard work of those who have organised these events. I understand that the Darwin Pride Festival had taken a hiatus for some time. It was relaunched in 2010 to overwhelming support. Now 12 months on I am proud to be here to support the event as it takes its place centre stage this wet season, with such an exciting line up of events.

Darwin Pride is about bringing our community together to celebrate our diversity and to demonstrate support for equality in our society. This event is the fruition of hard work from many in our community including friends, family members and many volunteers, who have all shown great support. As Administrator of the Northern Territory, I thank you all for your commitment to this outstanding festival.

The resurrection of this festival is timely as we seem to be on the cusp of great things to come and we see many relocate to the Territory. In true Territory fashion we are welcoming our new residents with open arms and we celebrate the diversity they each bring with them. As our society evolves and our population increases, we embrace those who bring innovation and inspiration to the Territory. Through events such as Darwin Pride we must all come together to rejoice in the uniqueness that is the Territory lifestyle.

I extend my gratitude to you all for inviting me to be here this evening to show my support for our long established Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender community. Through the growth of this event you too will help shape the Territory's future.

It is now my great honour to officially launch the 2011 Darwin Pride Festival!