

Progressive Atheists Inc.

Annual Report

1 July 2013 - 30 June 2014

*Presented at Progressive Atheists Inc. Annual General Meeting
Monday, 27 October 2014*

July 2013

Message from the President, Progressive Atheists Inc | 12 July 2013

Progressive Atheists submitted an article for the SECOA website:

<http://secoa.org/message-from-the-progressive-atheists-inc/>

World Youth Day | 23 - 28 July 2013

World Youth Day (WYD) is an event for young people organized by the Roman Catholic Church. WYD 2013 was held from 23-28 July 2013 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, as announced by Pope Benedict XVI at the end of the closing Mass of World Youth Day 2011 in Madrid, Spain. World Youth Day 2013 was the 14th international World Youth Day, an international Catholic event focused on religious faith and youth. The next WYD is planned for Kraków, Poland in 2016.

The 7 pm Project | 28 July 2013

Current committee member Peter Veitch appeared on The 7 pm Project in a news story about the Melbourne Sunday Assembly.

August 2013

Radio Interview | 23 August 2013

In August 2013 committee members Vidura Jayaratne and Elida Radig were interviewed by Philip Braham on the Yarra Valley FM 99.1 Community Radio Show. Philip conducts a lifestyle show titled "Keeping you sane" on Friday mornings.

September 2013

Federal Election Campaign | 7 September 2014

The Australian Federal Election was held on 7 September 2013. Progressive Atheists campaigned in August and September raising concerns about the religious influence in politics and the new religiously based political parties such as Family Voice, Australian Christians, Rise up Australia and others, though small in membership, exerted their influence on the electorate with their own version on 'family values'.

October 2013

Royal Commission | Zoe's Law | Marriage Equality

Progressive Atheists followed the news about The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse; the anti-abortion bill "Zoe's Law" originally introduced into the NSW Parliament by Fred Nile; and the rise and fall of the ACT bill to legalise same sex marriage.

Annual General Meeting | 29 October 2013

Progressive Atheists held their 3rd AGM at La Notte and invited guest speaker Judy Courtin, Lawyer and PhD Candidate from the Faculty of Law Monash University, for her very well researched and informative speech on the "The Royal Commission into Child Sexual Abuse", detailing the inadequacies of the laws in enabling prosecution of church perpetrators and the need for secularism in Australia.

November 2013

Stop the Evangelical Tour of Australia and the Pacific | November 2013

Progressive Atheists launched a campaign to "Stop Witch Hunting & Homophobic Evangelical Tour of Australia and the Pacific". You can read our full report on our website.

<http://progressiveatheists.org/campaigns-projects/evangelical-tour-of-australia-pacific/>

December 2013

Brought a Merry Christ-Myth to us all!

Child Abuse Inquiry | Royal Commission | Zoe's Law | Marriage Equality

News continued regarding the Victorian Parliament's inquiry into the handling of child abuse by religious and other organisations, The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. Zoe's Law passed in the NSW lower house voted through with 63 votes to 26 and 'marriage equality' in NSW was short lived with the Federal Government submission to the High Court.

January 2014

Vision & Goals | 29 January 2014

On Wednesday 29th January members of the Progressive Atheists met to consider our vision and goals for 2014. We presented our achievements in 2013 and an outline of our plans for 2014 in terms of our membership base, public profile, structure, networks, projects, campaigns and events, all with reference to our newly adopted Strategic Plan.

PATHWAYS Coalition for Diversity Education | January 2014

Progressive Atheists were invited to participate in a program called "PATHWAYS Coalition for Diversity Education", directed to Year 10 students to learn about comparative religion / worldviews via high schools in Victoria. Read more on our website.

<http://progressiveatheists.org/campaigns-projects/pathways/>

February 2014

Creationism Debate | 4 February 2014

Progressive Atheists promoting debate regarding a debate on Creationism. Bill Nye "the Science Guy" accepted an invitation to debate Ken Ham of Answers in Genesis at the Creation Museum in Kentucky on 4th February 2014. The event was streamed on the internet live and was publicised on both sides. The RDFRS criticised the move stating "Scientists should not debate creationists. Period."

Darwin Day BBQ | Tuesday, 11th February 2014

Progressive Atheists encouraged worldwide celebration of Darwin Day, whilst joined with the Atheist Society, Vic Skeptics and others to celebrate Darwin Day in Melbourne, enjoying a lecture by Rick Barker (now committee member) on "The Pleistocene Epoch and the Emergence of the Genus Homo".

Secular Activism Conference | Saturday 22nd February 2014

The Sydney Atheists in conjunction with SECOA hosted the conference at the Hotel Strattons in Sydney. Guest speakers included Professor Marion Maddox - theologian and author; Lyn Allison - Australian Democrats Senator from 1996 to 2008; Lara Wood - Fairness In Religion In Schools (FIRIS); and Cathy Byrne - Post-Doctoral Research Fellow at Macquarie University. Committee member Brian Jones also attended this conference and gave a favourable report back to the committee.

March 2014

Clean Up Australia Day | 2nd March 2014

Progressive Atheists promoted "Clean Up Australia Day" as part of our efforts to encourage environmental awareness and encourage participation in activities with the broader Australian community for a common good.

International Women's Day | 8th March 2014

Progressive Atheists acknowledged International Women's Day by drawing attention to domestic violence in Australia and asking what more we can do to protect women and children from the horrors of domestic violence in their own homes.

International Day to Defend Apostates and Blasphemers | 14 March 2013

This day is an opportunity to remember and offer support to people like Alexander Aan, who has recently been released from an Indonesian prison. The Jakarta News reported on 31 January that atheist Alexander Aan had been released early from his prison sentence of 2-1/2 years for "inciting religious hostility" for posting on his personal Facebook page that "there is no god."

Progressive Atheists celebrated this day by starting to collect funds towards a scholarship and a lawyers fees fund for Alexander Aan.

Harmony Day | 21st March 2014

“Harmony Day 21 March is a day of cultural respect for everyone who calls Australia home – from the traditional owners of this land to those who have come from many countries around the world. By participating in Harmony Day activities, we can learn and understand how all Australians from diverse backgrounds equally belong to this nation and enrich it.”

Progressive Atheists attend the Viva Festival in Federation Square this Harmony Day wearing our t-shirts and giving out leaflets to contribute the progressive atheist perspective towards the Harmony Day celebrations.

Progressive Atheists Badges | 22 March 2014

At the committee meeting in March, member Lindy Price presented 100 uniquely Progressive Atheists badges, designed in consultation with the committee. The 2 different designs and 3 different colours are available for sale on the website.

<http://progressiveatheists.org/product-category/badges/>

Progressive Atheists Inc. Members Email Exchange | March 2014

The Progressive Atheists Members Email Exchange was set up in March 2014 to allow current members of Progressive Atheists to receive Progressive Atheists news and exchange emails regarding current events, projects and campaigns.

RECOGNISE | March 2014

In March 2014 the RECOGNISE Campaign was launched to recognise Indigenous Australians in the Australian Constitution. Progressive Atheists will follow the campaign and continue to provide news updates on progress.

Homophobic Law Uganda | March 2014

Progressive Atheists have worked in solidarity with Ugandan LGBTI to promote awareness of the backward laws in Uganda.

April 2014

PayPal on Website | 8 April 2014

On 8 April 2014 Progressive Atheists Secretary, Brian Jones confirmed the creation of a paypal account. This account allows Progressive Atheists to sell Membership Renewals, New Memberships, t-shirts, windcheaters, badges on more online. This move has expanded opportunities for Progressive Atheists to gain more members as well as provided additional ways to buy products and collect donations for worthy causes.

Easter Zombie Sunday | 20th April 2014

Matthew, a Centurion, Zombies, Mary Magdalene and Jesus made up the lively cast of our "Easter Zombie Sunday Bible Re-enactment 2014" at Federation Square in Melbourne.

Easter Zombie Sunday provides an opportunity for us to demonstrate the ridiculousness of heeding claims made by a book written hundreds of years before the advent of modern science. In this case the words of Matthew 27:50-53.

Event coordinator Elida Radig did a brilliant job of inspiring cast and crew to attend the day and make the event a success. We received lots of attention and gave out many flyers. The majority of observers were very curious and the event seemed to appeal most to the younger audience.

Sign up for 2015: <https://www.facebook.com/events/711831045542027/>

Helping the Homeless & those At Risk | May 2014

In our May bulletin Progressive Atheists helped to promote Atheists Helping the Homeless (AHH), an atheist organisation that seeks to provide assistance to Melbourne's homeless population.

AHH is looking for expressions of interest from people who want to help take us forward. If you're one of those people then let us know here <http://goo.gl/cXyWw3>

Many atheists express interest in helping the homeless but are concerned about working with religious organisations, and the drive to help is often wasted as a result. Being an explicitly atheist organisation provides certainty that religion will not enter into our work and also provides a rallying point for the atheist community in a way that other secular organisations don't.

All of this comes with the side benefit of dispelling some of the negative attitudes towards atheists, and shows people that you really can be good without gods.

Like the Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/melbahh>

Please register your interest: <http://goo.gl/cXyWw3>

May 2014

Rescind Saudi Laws Designating Atheists as "Terrorists" | May 2014

In May 2014 Progressive Atheists continued our campaign "*Combating Religious Persecution*" by promoting awareness of the anti-atheist laws in Saudi Arabia and asked people to sign a petition set up by Atheist Alliance International.

http://salsa4.salsalabs.com/o/50973/p/dia/action3/common/public/?action_KEY=10730

June 2014

Combating Religious Persecution | June 2014

Progressive Atheists June bulletin raises issues of female genital mutilation in the UK and in NSW, and calls attention again towards the life of non-Muslims and non-believers in countries such as Pakistan, where "*life is as good as hell thanks to the "State Religion" of Pakistan*" according to G. M. Lakho, an ex-Muslim residing in Pakistan who has created this petition: <http://www.change.org/p/the-secretary-general-united-nations-recognize-the-international-day-against-state-religion-5>

STOP National School Chaplaincy Program | June 2014

The Progressive Atheists launched this most recent campaign on secularism in schools on 13th June - 6 days before the High Court handed down its decision that the NSCP funding is illegal. The main aim of the campaign is to mobilise all concerned citizens into taking action. Let your local government state and territory leaders know that you don't support the continuation of the NSCP.

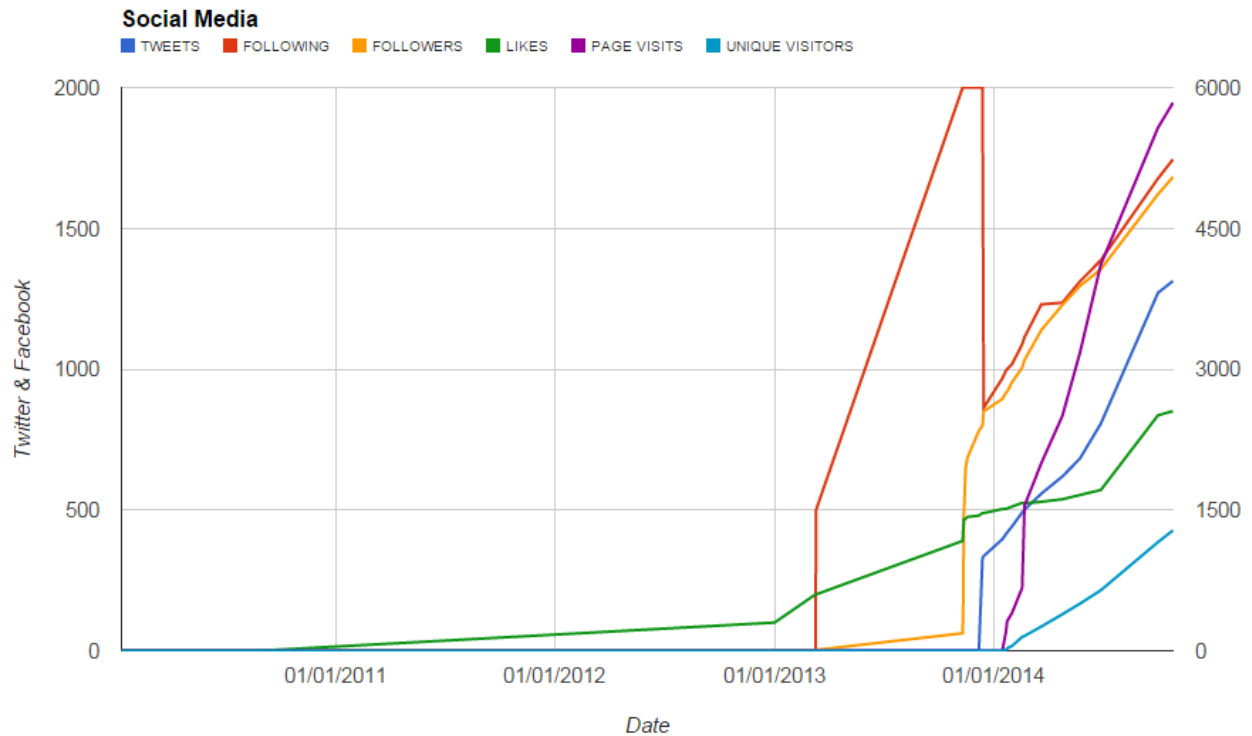
If some form of student support is found to be required in our public schools, then such a program would need to be secular in nature, non-discriminatory and provided by properly trained professionals suited to the requirements of students, and not based on a thinly veiled desire to Christianise public school children.

Just after the High Court decision on 19 June 2014, the federal government gifted \$37 million to chaplaincy providers Australia wide. This funding will cover the program until December 2014. There is speculation the government paid providers well in advance intentionally in anticipation of the High Court ruling.

Read more on our website: <http://progressiveatheists.org/campaigns-projects/religious-infiltration-in-australian-schools/>

Social Media Report for Progressive Atheists Inc.

Founded	Facebook Page	Website	Twitter Account	Website Counter
10/01/2010	28/08/2010	29/09/2012	10/03/2013	19/01/2014



11/03/13	10/11/2013	21/01/2014	21/03/2014	28/06/2014	26/10/2014
0	0	414	558	807	1313
500	2000	994	1230	1387	1745
3	62	916	1139	1355	1682
200	390	504	529	571	851
0	0	200	2000	4117	5838
0	0	10	258	645	1282

END OF REPORT