

Following the path of a leader in public health

Levinia Crooks, AM

28.11.1960 – 16.10.2017



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Professor Sharon Lewin

DIRECTOR, THE PETER DOHERTY INSTITUTE FOR INFECTION AND IMMUNITY
November 2017

Levinia Crooks, AM, Chief Executive Officer of the Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine (ASHM) and Adjunct Associate Professor, The University of New South Wales and Latrobe University died on October 16th 2017 from progressive non-Hodgkin Lymphoma.

She was awarded a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in 2008 for her services to HIV and the President's Award from the AIDS Council of New South Wales in 2015 for her leadership in the HIV sector.

Levinia graduated from University of Wollongong with a Bachelor of Arts degree with Honours in Psychology and a Masters of Business Administration from the University of New England.

In the 1980s, at the very beginning of the AIDS epidemic in Australia, she became the manager for the Wollongong AIDS Research Project. Levinia went on to become the first executive officer of the National Association of People with HIV Australia (NAPWA), helping to found the networks that became the basis of Australia's world-leading collaborative government and community sector public health response.

Her work throughout the 1990s included running counselling workshops for the Northern Territory AIDS Council, formulating an evaluation strategy for services to people living with HIV and AIDS with the Commonwealth government, and developing a national media campaign promoting health monitoring and early diagnosis for people living with HIV for the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations. She managed the HIV Prescribers Continuing Medical Education Project for the South-Eastern Sydney Area Health Service in the late 1990s.

From late 1999, she was the Chief Executive Officer of ASHM, a position she held until ill-health forced her retirement in September this year.

Under her leadership, ASHM extended its mandate from HIV to viral hepatitis and sexual health. She brought with this change, the values and principles that shaped the HIV response from the beginning – outstanding advocacy, meaningful partnerships, a priority on community-based and patient-centred care and engagement at all times of people living with HIV, viral hepatitis or sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

Amongst her many contributions during her tenure at ASHM, she advocated for, contributed to and shaped the national strategies for HIV, viral hepatitis and STIs and more recently a separate strategy for Blood Borne Viruses and STIs in Indigenous people. She co-ordinated the application to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee to remove the limitations on prescribing antiretrovirals based on CD4 count, making Australia one of the first countries to approve the initiation of antiretroviral treatment for all people living with HIV. She advocated tirelessly for appropriate pricing of direct-acting antivirals for hepatitis C and led the development and implementation of national guidelines for the use of pre-exposure prophylaxis for the prevention of HIV infection.

Within the Asia Pacific region, ASHM has become widely known for its outstanding education programs, successful advocacy with government and its commitment to developing multidisciplinary leadership across the sector. Many similar organisations across the region model themselves on ASHM and representatives often sought Levinia's advice and mentorship. Her commitment to bringing services to those living with HIV, viral hepatitis or STIs was as well-known in Port Moresby as it was in Sydney and Melbourne.

I had the pleasure of working closely with Levinia as CEO of ASHM when I was President of ASHM from 2005-2007. We also worked closely together

as members of the organising committees for the 7th International AIDS Society meeting on HIV Pathogenesis in Sydney in 2007 and the 20th International AIDS Conference in Melbourne in 2014. Both meetings were major international events that brought thousands of people from the HIV sector across the globe to Australia

I saw Levinia's capacity for hard work, her outstanding skill in bringing diverse groups together and her ability to form professional relationships with everyone and anyone. She did her work with passion and an unwavering commitment to science, evidence based practice, robust and informed government policy and a deep understanding that engagement of community was at the centre of everything. She loved Australia and was immensely proud of all that the sector had achieved in Australia's response to HIV and wanted the same approach to be shared and adopted by our neighbouring countries.

Throughout Levinia's tenure as CEO of ASHM, she worked with almost every clinician, researcher and community leader in the HIV, viral hepatitis and sexual health sectors. Particularly in the HIV sector, she has influenced, mentored and inspired an entire generation of professionals. She taught us all a way of making a difference in the work each of us do – to be strategic, be inclusive, do it in partnership, always use the best evidence to inform practice and never be complacent. Levinia was the consummate professional – but she always brought to her work warmth, empathy and a sense of fun.

Acknowledgements of Levinia's death are littered with words of strength and respect. She befriended, encouraged, persuaded, inspired, challenged, was tireless and passionate, extraordinary, energetic and influential. For those who worked with her, her passing is intensely sad. For those who follow in her path, it is worth considering the incredible impact one person can have.



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THE SUM OF US

Collective reflections on a remarkable woman, Levinia Crooks AM

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With love from your community

OCTOBER 2017

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Responding to the public health dilemmas that face us requires collaboration between community, pharmaceutical, NGOs, and medical groups and we all have a role to play – some take a leading part, others play a supporting role. Some seek the limelight, others are happy to stay in the background.

If you are living with HIV, hepatitis or a blood-borne virus, live in a community affected by these conditions, or have worked in the blood borne virus sector in Australia, you have been touched by the efforts of Levinia Crooks.

And you may be aware that you are no doubt part of a generation of health professionals in our sector right across Australasia who have been formed by the relentless and tirelessness efforts of a single woman, pushing for significant, meaningful and often dramatic changes and improvements in the responses to HIV, sexual health and viral hepatitis.



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THE SUM OF US

Collective reflections on a remarkable woman, Levinia Crooks AM

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Whether you knew her, knew of her, passed her in the hallways of some conference, sat with her in some meeting somewhere or read one of the copious volumes of policies, practice guides, funding submissions, strategies, reports or opinion pieces she authored, Levinia's fingerprints, along with her tenacity, her passion and her perseverance remain in the record as a legacy as one of the architects of the response to HIV in Australia.

Some of us stood with her when we were angry and scared. Together we crafted the slogans that we put down on placards, we organised countless letter writing campaigns and we walked together down the street holding candles, reading out the names while holding back the tears. Together we persevered.

Some of us spend many a late night trying to penetrate the vernacular of pharmaceuticals, the weird code of virology, or the cut and thrust of scientific enquiry and debate. We strove to match her dedication, resolve, energy and sheer determination to ensure change for any number of countless initiatives she championed.

Some of us danced with her, rolling our heads to the music, eyes closed, we lifted our arms to the delights that lifted our spirits.

Some of us felt her fury; others saw it on show. She had command of the vernacular that would make a sailor blush and she passionate about tacking the hard tasks and issues that others just talked about, or blatantly ignored.

Some of us, as her students, saw her in full flight during lectures. It was more than teaching; she inspired us to reach further for the possibilities of the action that would make meaning of what she had to say. She pushed us harder and further than we thought we could go.

THE SUM OF US

Collective reflections on a remarkable woman, Levinia Crooks AM

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Some of us felt her compassion, maybe directly when she offered an opportunity that otherwise we wouldn't have had or when she took time from her constantly busy schedule to help us understand what we were doing. Certainly for those of us who are often considered to be 'marginal' (the positive injecting drug using poofster sex worker), she stepped up and out in front and demanded that all of us leave our misconceptions, prejudices and our bigotry at the door.

Some of us watched in awe as she took charge of the ubiquitous white board covered in thoughts, comments, contradictions and collaboration. And as if by magic, through what seemed like an incomprehensible mess, brought disparate thoughts into a comprehensive project statement and plan of action.

Some of us ended up on her lounge room floor travelling from interstate for an ACT UP action or Mardi Gras, and were greeted by Levinia in her trademark black leather vest and Doc Martens. She knew the power of how to harness a community which didn't just reside in bricks and mortar of an organisation, but was felt just as viscerally in the bars and on the streets.

Some of us are part of that special group of people, nurtured and cultivated for our caring and compassionate nature. A rag-tag assortment of professionals across Australia speaking out for the people that we care for in different communities. And beside us, supporting us, a dedicated, strong and brilliant team of people who have travelled through the ranks at ASHM.

Some of us saw through the 'tough guy' image to a core of warmth, generosity, care and absolute dedication to the rights of those she ultimately served. We saw the wounds if those core values were ignored, questioned, unacknowledged, misattributed or simply misunderstood.

Levinia leaves us all a major, important and extensive legacy to carry forward, with countless lives impacted by her energetic, pragmatic, visionary, brave and can-do approach.

It is incumbent on us to take the sadness and the loss we feel, and ensure that we continue to voice what must be heard; a voice that builds upon Levinia's work and passion over the years.

Levinia believed we all played a part and she believed that together we are the sum of us.



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Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis
and Sexual Health Medicine

The true definition of an ally: a reflection of Levinia Crooks

The climate for those living with HIV and AIDS in the 1980s was clouded with uncertainty, misconceptions, fear and death. The HIV community had few friends on the outside but one woman, Levinia Crooks, became a trailblazer of what it looks like to be a real ally of the HIV community.

Being an ally is more than being sympathetic towards those experiencing discrimination. A true ally takes on the identity and puts oneself in the position of a group being discriminated against or treated unjustly and is willing to act.

Levinia saw the injustices towards people living with HIV (PLHIV) and became angry with us. She cried and mourned with us as we buried partners, friends, brothers and sisters. Our hurt and our struggles became her own.

Levinia's choice to stand with the HIV community during the early days of the response cost her relationships, privileges and even her reputation. But her passion for PLHIV and her vision to see beyond the fear and shame that plagued the community is the fruit of what the HIV community lives in today.

Her vision fuelled her to join the HIV response in almost every way imaginable. She was instrumental in the first grassroots community organisation, National People Living with AIDS Coalition (NPLWAC) and continued to work on behalf of the HIV community until her recent departure from the Australasian Society for HIV Medicine (ASHM). You'd be hard pressed to find an area that didn't have Levinia's fingerprints on it. Her influence stretched across government, medicine, research and into the community response. She developed strategies, sat on numerous committees and marched alongside PLHIV in the name of dignity, respect, and equality.

She encouraged us to speak up in the face of fear. Our voices slowly became creditable and our experience valued in the HIV response. She called out the strength, uniqueness and value of each PLHIV she came in contact with. It was the encouragement the HIV community needed as we battled to see every PLHIV live without discrimination and fear.

Our community stands behind the statement "nothing about us without us" and Levinia was always at the side of PLHIV. She was a friend, a teacher, a mentor and a fighter.

Levinia's devotion to the HIV community is one that is unrivalled. It proves what is possible when we all work together. Her death is one the community mourns and celebrates as we look back, together with other allies, at the path she paved for us all.



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Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis
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Levinia Crooks understood the power of community

Director of the Doherty Institute Professor Sharon Lewin reflected on the life of HIV activist and researcher Levinia Crooks, describing her work as “an incredible legacy”.

“She had very unique and special relationships with so many people, always very professional but also infused with great fondness and warmth,” Lewin said.

Her recollections come after the news that Crooks passed away earlier in October, which has brought Australia’s HIV communities together to celebrate on the life and work of one of the country’s most celebrated and influential HIV advocates.

“Levinia’s contribution to the HIV sector has been incredible,” continued Lewin.

“In fact, I think she mentored and counselled and inspired a whole generation of HIV professionals. Crooks first became involved in the response to HIV and AIDS in 1986 when she began managing the Wollongong AIDS Research Project. Over her next few years on the project she interviewed people affected by HIV and AIDS, many of whom became seriously ill or died during this time.”

The project was an important early academic response to the epidemic, and set a course for Crooks that would continue for over three decades.

She went on to work or volunteer with almost every major Australian HIV organisation.

From the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO) to the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation to

ACON, Crooks has left a legacy of policy and program development that has profoundly shaped the landscape of Australia’s HIV response.

Her most recent position as the long-standing CEO of ASHM—what began as the Australasian Society for HIV Medicine—has not only had an impact here in Australia, but around the region and internationally as well.



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Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis
and Sexual Health Medicine

Levinia Crooks understood the power of community

But throughout her career, Crooks' outlook was shaped by the early work that exposed her to the human side of the epidemic.

"Her career began at a time when there was little hope for people living with HIV," said Victorian AIDS Council (VAC) President Chad Hughes.

"At every level, her contribution furthered debate in substantive and important ways. Her leadership legacy is one of partnership, collaboration, vision and courage and in many ways she will be impossible to replace."

Many in the sector have reflected on their personal relationships with Crooks, who was a formidable advocate as much as she was a warm, caring person completely dedicated to the communities she served. Over her decades working in these communities she was more than a professional giant, she was a friend to many and even a caregiver in the darkest days of the epidemic.

CEO of Positive Life Craig Cooper recalled the ways Crooks had become embedded in the communities of gay men she worked within and alongside.

"Levinia also had a unique tribal association, commitment and connection with gay men—we remember dancing and partying with Levinia prior to and after HIV arrived in Sydney," Cooper said.

"We join with the Australasian HIV sector, her friends, colleagues, and gay, lesbian and trans brothers and sisters in mourning her loss and acknowledging her extraordinary contribution and commitment to PLHIV and their clinical management, welfare and human rights."



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Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis
and Sexual Health Medicine

Levinia Crooks understood the power of community

Brent Allan, a long-time HIV activist and senior advisor for ASHM and ICASO, echoed Cooper's comments—Allan saw her relationship to and understanding of community as the heart of Crooks' ability to change hearts and minds when it came to HIV.

"She knew the real passion of community didn't just reside in bricks and mortar of an organisation, but was felt just as viscerally in the bars and on the streets," he said.

The words of so many advocates from Australia's response to HIV point to the breadth and profundity of Crooks' impact on the lives of everyone she worked with, an impact acknowledged by the Commonwealth of Australia.

Crooks' appointment as a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in 2008 was the just recognition for a career spent improving the lives of people living with and affected by HIV.

While her legacy is felt across every organisation she has been involved in, none of Australia's HIV institutions has been more profoundly affected than ASHM, where Scott McGill has stepped in as Action CEO after the end of Crooks' 18-year tenure in the role.

During her time as CEO Crooks elevated not only her organisation but Australia's role in the international HIV response, representing the country in global forums and supporting the development of new HIV programs around the Asia-Pacific.

"She will be remembered as a warm and generous friend to so many—always ready to roll her sleeves up, get on with the work at hand and without exception bringing her formidable leadership, intelligence, wit and problem solving abilities to the table," McGill said.

"While the ASHM staff team and board are enormously saddened by her passing, Levinia leaves us all a major and extensive legacy to carry forward and build upon."



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Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis
and Sexual Health Medicine

Vale Adjunct Associate Professor Levinia Crooks, AM

28 November 1960 – 16 October 2017

It is with great sadness that the Board and staff of the Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine (ASHM) announces the passing of Adjunct Associate Professor Levinia Crooks, AM on 16th October 2017 after a long and courageously fought illness. Levinia was 56 and is survived by her mother, Judy.

Levinia's contribution to the work of ASHM has been untiring, far-reaching, extraordinary and exemplary. She was Chief Executive Officer from November 1999 to September 2017 and has been a leading advocate in the Australasian and international BBV and STI field.

Levinia served for over 30 years as a champion for people's rights in the health sector. She began in the 1980s supporting her friends and colleagues impacted by HIV/AIDS, conducting social research to inform the development of counselling and support services for people living with HIV. She also served as President of the AIDS Council of NSW and Bobby Goldsmith Foundation, as well as on the Board of the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations.

She applied her considerable experience and skills to push for dramatic changes in the viral hepatitis response and greater attention to sexual health needs. Her drive and focus on the needs of the workforce in HIV, viral hepatitis and sexual health pioneered ASHM as a provider of high quality resources and training. In this capacity she has written a wide range of educational resources and provided robust advocacy for many initiatives that resulted in increased access to HIV and viral hepatitis treatments.

In 2008 she was made a Member of the Order of Australia for her contribution to HIV policy, her care for people with HIV and her contribution to health generally. In 2015 she was further honoured with the ACON President's Award in recognition of a lifetime dedicated to improving the health and well-being of people affected by HIV and AIDS.

Levinia leaves us all a major and extensive legacy to carry forward and build upon, with countless lives in our region positively impacted by her energetic, pragmatic, visionary, brave and can-do approach. Moreover she will be remembered as a warm and generous friend to so many ready to roll her sleeves up, get on with the work at hand and bringing her formidable intelligence, wit and problem solving abilities to the table.

Vale Levinia! You are sorely missed.

Levinia Crooks: leadership in blood-borne viruses and sexual health

Published 6 November 2017

Authored by
Sharon Lewin

Director, The Peter Doherty
Institute for Infection and
Immunity

The author acknowledges helpful
comments from Brent Allen, Andrea
Fischer, Edwina Wright and Miranda
Smith.



LEVINIA Crooks, AM, Chief Executive Officer of the Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine (ASHM) and adjunct associate professor at the University of New South Wales and Latrobe University, died on 16 October 2017 from progressive non-Hodgkin lymphoma.

Levinia was a close colleague and friend for over 15 years. I had the pleasure of working closely with her when I was President of ASHM from 2005 to 2007. We also worked together as members of the organising committees for the 4th International AIDS Society Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention in Sydney, in 2007, and the 20th International AIDS Conference in Melbourne, in 2014. Both meetings were major international events that brought thousands of people from across the globe to Australia.

I saw Levinia's capacity for hard work, her outstanding skill in bringing diverse groups together and her ability to form professional relationships with everyone and anyone. She did her work with passion and an unwavering commitment to science, evidence-based practise, robust and informed government policy and a deep understanding that engagement of community was at the centre of everything. She loved Australia and was immensely proud of its response to HIV, and wanted these strategies to be shared and adopted by our neighbouring countries.

Throughout Levinia's tenure as CEO of ASHM, she worked with almost every clinician, researcher and community leader in the HIV, viral hepatitis and sexual health sectors. In the HIV sector, in particular, she has influenced, mentored and inspired an entire generation of professionals. She taught us all a way of making a difference in the work each of us do – to be strategic, be inclusive, do it in partnership, always use the best evidence to inform practice and never be complacent. Levinia was the consummate professional, but she always brought warmth, empathy and a sense of fun to her work.

Acknowledgements of Levinia's death are littered with words of strength and respect. She befriended, encouraged, persuaded, inspired, challenged, was tireless and passionate, extraordinary, energetic and influential. For those who worked with her, her passing is intensely sad. For those who follow in her path, it is worth considering the incredible impact one person can have. At the [Australasian HIV and AIDS Conference](#) this week, we will all take a moment to reflect on her achievements.

Published 6 November 2017

Authored by **Sharon Lewin**

Director, The Peter Doherty
Institute for Infection and
Immunity

The author acknowledges helpful
comments from Brent Allen, Andrea
Fischer, Edwina Wright and Miranda
Smith.



Levinia graduated from the University of Wollongong with a Bachelor of Arts degree with Honours in Psychology and had a Master of Business Administration degree from the University of New England.

In the 1980s, at the very beginning of the AIDS epidemic in Australia, she became the manager for the Wollongong AIDS Research Project. She went on to become the first executive officer of the National Association of People with HIV Australia (NAPWHA).

Her work throughout the 1990s included running counselling workshops for the Northern Territory AIDS Council, formulating an evaluation strategy for services to people living with HIV and AIDS with the Commonwealth government, and developing a national media campaign promoting health monitoring and early diagnosis for people living with HIV for the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations. She managed the HIV Prescribers' Continuing Medical Education Project for the South Eastern Sydney Area Health Service in the late 1990s.

From late 1999, she was the CEO of ASHM, a position she held until ill-health forced her to retire in September 2017.

Under her leadership, ASHM extended its mandate from HIV to viral hepatitis and sexual health. She brought with this change the values and principles that shaped the HIV response from the beginning – outstanding advocacy, meaningful partnerships, a priority on community-based and patient-centred care and engagement at all times with people living with HIV, viral hepatitis or sexually transmissible infections (STIs).

Among her many contributions during her tenure at ASHM, she advocated, contributed to and shaped the national strategies for HIV, viral hepatitis and STIs. She coordinated the Pharmaceutical Benefits Advisory Committee application to remove the limitations on prescribing antiretrovirals based on CD4 T-cell count, making Australia one of the first countries to approve the initiation of antiretroviral treatment for all people living with HIV. She advocated tirelessly for appropriate pricing of direct-acting antivirals for hepatitis C and led the development and implementation of national guidelines for the use of pre-exposure prophylaxis for the prevention of HIV infection.

Within the Asia–Pacific region, ASHM became widely known for its outstanding education programs, successful advocacy with government and its commitment to developing multidisciplinary leadership across the sector. Many similar organisations across the region model themselves on ASHM and representatives often sought Levinia's advice and mentorship. Her commitment to bringing services to those living with HIV, viral hepatitis or STIs was as well known in Port Moresby as it was in Sydney and Melbourne.

Levinia's contributions were publicly recognised in 2008 when she was appointed Member of the Order of Australia for her services to HIV, and she was granted the President's Award from the AIDS Council of New South Wales in 2015 for her leadership in the HIV sector.

Tribute

TIRELESS HIV ACTIVIST LEVINIA CROOKS PASSES AWAY



Published by **Star Observer**

"It's difficult to think of another person who has had the kind of influence that Levinia has had over the course of the last three decades of the epidemic"

Tireless HIV and AIDS activist and researcher Levinia Crooks passed away in Sydney over the weekend after a long battle with illness.

Her work in the HIV sector has spanned the epidemic in Australia.

Crooks was the first Executive Officer for the National Association of People Living with AIDS (now known as NAPWA), and she was the President of ACON from 1988 – 1989 and 1991 – 1992.

She was also instrumental in the work of the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation (BGF), one of Australia's longest running HIV and AIDS charities.

For the last 18 years Crooks held the position of Chief Executive of the Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine (ASHM).

Acting Chief Executive of ASHM, Scott McGill, said Crooks was leaving behind a major legacy to carry forward and build upon.

Countless lives here at home and in our region, have been positively impacted by her energetic, pragmatic, visionary, brave and can-do approach," he said.

"She will be remembered as a warm and generous friend to so many – always ready to roll her sleeves up, get on with the work at hand and without exception bringing her formidable leadership, intelligence, wit and problem-solving abilities to the table.

"We are proud to be custodians of that and to honor and celebrate her memory by continuing to move that forward."

President of the Victorian AIDS Council (VAC), Chad Hughes, said that at every level, Crooks' contribution furthered debate in substantive and important ways.

"It is probably difficult to think of another person who has had the kind of influence that Levinia has had over the course of the last three decades of the epidemic," he said.

"Her career began at a time when there was little hope for people living with HIV and she was instrumental, not only in the areas of care and support for people living with HIV and AIDS but at important moments in prevention such as her role in the drafting of national guidelines for the provision of post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP).

"Her leadership legacy is one of partnership, collaboration, vision, and courage and in many ways, she will be impossible to replace."

Media Release

From **Positive Life NSW**



Vale Levinia Crooks

17 October 2017

Positive Life NSW is deeply saddened with news of the passing of Levinia Crooks, a courageous advocate for people living with HIV (PLHIV) and a leader in the Australian HIV response.

Her significant commitment and contributions to the HIV sector for close to three decades cannot be understated. Levinia also had a unique tribal association, commitment and connection with gay men. We remember dancing and partying with Levinia prior to and after HIV arrived in Sydney.

We join with the Australasian HIV sector, her friends, colleagues, and gay, lesbian and trans brothers and sisters in mourning her loss and acknowledging her extraordinary contribution and commitment to PLHIV and their clinical management, welfare and human rights.

Levinia was a truly unique and remarkable individual. We are humbled by her commitment, drive and passion.

Tribute

From [ACON](#)



**IN
LOVING
MEMORY**



LEVINIA CROOKS

16 October 2017



The Board and staff of ACON mourn the passing of Levinia Crooks, one of Australia's leading HIV advocates.

Through her tireless and passionate service over the years, Levinia made a significant contribution to improving the health and wellbeing of people affected by HIV/AIDS.

In a career spanning over two decades, Levinia has worked in various roles in the community, clinical and research sectors. For the last 18 years, she held the position of Chief Executive Officer of the Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine (ASHM).

As ASHM CEO, Levinia has been at the forefront of Australia's response to HIV/AIDS, supporting doctors and health care providers to best support people living with and at risk of HIV and hepatitis. She has been an instrumental and respected voice in shaping various national and regional strategies to address blood borne viruses and STIs, and was heavily involved in HIV related research.

Levinia also had longstanding involvement with the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation, where she worked as President, Vice President and a member of staff over a 10 year period, and she made significant contributions to several other HIV related organisations including the National Association of People Living with HIV Australia, the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations and the Northern Territory AIDS & Hepatitis Council.

Levinia also worked at ACON in its formative years and was twice appointed as president – from 1988 to 1990, and then again from 1991 to 1992.

Levinia's contribution to Australia's HIV/AIDS response has truly been exceptional, and her dedicated service to health and wellbeing has improved countless lives of people affected by HIV.

We extend our deepest sympathies to Levinia's family and loved ones, and the Board and staff of ASHM. She will be greatly missed by all of us here at ACON.

Tribute to Levinia Crooks

From [ACON](#)



Levinia Crooks was the recipient of the ACON President's Award at the 2015 Honour Awards. The award was bestowed by former ACON President Mark Orr. An extract of Mark's tribute to Levinia at the Honour Awards is featured here:

Responding to the impact of HIV and AIDS is a cause to which the recipient of this year's President's Award has devoted much of her life.

For more than two decades, Levinia Crooks has been one of Australia's leading HIV advocates, and has devoted herself to improving the health and wellbeing of people affected by HIV and AIDS.

Currently the Chief Executive Officer of ASHM, the Australasian Society of HIV Medicine, Levinia has been a leader in Australia's response to HIV and AIDS for 25 years and has worked in a variety of professional and volunteer roles in the community, clinical and research sectors.

For the last 15 years, Levinia has steered the work of ASHM, the peak support agency in Australia and New Zealand for health professionals who respond to HIV, viral hepatitis and sexually transmissible infections.

During this time, she has been at the forefront of educating doctors and health care providers both nationally and regionally about how to best care for and support people living with and at risk of HIV and AIDS.

Keeping the medical profession strongly engaged with HIV prevention and support has been crucial to the success of Australia's response to HIV and Levinia's work has played a large part in that process.

As ASHM CEO, Levinia has been instrumental in shaping various national and regional strategies to address blood borne viruses and STIs.

She has been heavily involved in HIV related research, participating as a researcher, reviewer and committee member on many clinical studies and academic projects.

Levinia also played a key role in organising the 2014 World AIDS Conference in Melbourne as a Member of the event's Coordinating Committee.

In addition to her work with ASHM, Levinia has a longstanding involvement with HIV support agency the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation, where she worked as President, Vice President and a member of staff over a 10 year period from the mid-nineties to the mid-noughties.

Levinia has also made significant contributions to several other HIV related organisations including the National Association of People Living With HIV/AIDS, the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations and the Northern Territory AIDS Council.

Levinia is also a former employee of ACON as well as being a past president of ACON – twice in fact: first in the late 1980s and again in the early 1990s.

As you can see, Levinia Crooks' contribution to our community has been truly exceptional and we're delighted that we can recognise her contributions and achievements with this award.

Her work at local, national and international levels has been extraordinary not only in relation to HIV prevention but also with respect to the provision of treatment, support and advocacy for people living with, at risk of and affected by HIV and AIDS.

Having improved the lives of tens of thousands of people here in Australia, we believe Levinia is a genuine hero and tonight we pay tribute to her extraordinary service with this much deserved honour.

Media Release



Burnet Deputy Director (Programs) Professor Margaret

spoke to Joy FM about the life and contribution of Levinia Crooks. [You can listen here.](#)

Burnet Institute recognises the sad passing of Adjunct Associate Professor Levinia Crooks AM, who was CEO of the Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine (ASHM) for the past 18 years, and pays tribute to a leader in the field.

Associate Professor Crooks' enormous contribution to Australia's HIV and broader blood-borne virus and sexual health response was acknowledged by Burnet Institute Deputy Director, Professor Margaret Hellard.

"Levinia worked tirelessly with community, clinicians, other health service staff and government to develop and shepherd changes to policy and practices of HIV, blood borne virus and sexual health in Australia, directly improving the lives of many people affected these diseases," Professor Hellard said.

"In more recent years, Levinia used this experience to help similar community organisations in our region improve the HIV and viral hepatitis response in their own countries.

"A woman of enormous energy and enthusiasm, Levinia will be remembered for her significant and sustained personal and professional contribution to the sector. She will be greatly missed.

"Associate Professor Crooks passed away on 16 October 2017, aged 56, after a long and courageously fought illness, ASHM said yesterday. She is survived by her mother, Judy.

She was CEO of ASHM from November 1999 to September 2017, stepping down from the role just a month before her death.

Associate Professor Crooks served for over 30 years as a champion for people's rights in the health sector, supporting friends and colleagues impacted by HIV and AIDS in the 1980s, and conducting social research to inform development of counselling and support services for people living with HIV.

She was always inclusive, and supported and promoted the dignity of others. As an advocate she was optimistic and inspiring and never held back by the expectations of governments or other donors.

Associate Professor Crooks always thought globally but from a sense of what mattered, not from personal ambition. She could work in inclusive ways with the poorest, the sickest and the excluded, but also with governments, health workers, researchers and big pharmaceutical companies.

She was determined and competent in every professional task she took on and was central to many partnership endeavours.

Associate Professor Crooks also served as President of the AIDS Council of NSW (ACON) and Bobby Goldsmith Foundation, as well as on the Board of the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations. She has written a wide range of educational resources and provided robust advocacy for many initiatives that resulted in increased access to HIV and viral hepatitis treatments.

In 2008 she was made a Member of the Order of Australia for her contribution to HIV policy, her care for people with HIV and her contribution to health generally. In 2015 she was further honoured with ACON's President's Award, in recognition of a lifetime dedicated to improving the health and well-being of people affected by HIV and AIDS.

ASHM said: "Levinia leaves us all a major and extensive legacy to carry forward and build upon, with countless lives in our region positively impacted by her energetic, pragmatic, visionary, brave and can-do approach.

"She will be remembered as a warm and generous friend to so many, ready to roll her sleeves up, get on with the work at hand and bring her formidable intelligence, wit and problem-solving abilities to the table."

Media Release

HIV and AIDS sector mourns the
loss of activist and visionary leader
Levinia Crooks

Published by [VAC](#)



16 OCTOBER 2017 – Tireless HIV/AIDS activist, researcher, mentor and visionary, Levinia Crooks died in Sydney on Sunday evening after a long battle with illness.

Levinia’s work in HIV/AIDS has spanned the epidemic in this country. Levinia was the first Executive Officer for the National Association of People Living with AIDS (NAPWA, later to become NAPWHA) and she was the President of the AIDS Council of New South Wales (ACON) from 1988 – 1989 and 1991 – 1992. Levinia was also instrumental in the work of the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation (BGF), one of Australia’s longest running HIV and AIDS charities. Typical of her no nonsense, practical approach to issues, she has spoken on the need for such a charity in the early days of the epidemic, “In an environment like that you have to act. It is wrong that you have to act, it is wrong that you have to establish a parallel process. But there is a period of time in which you do have to do that.” BGF continues its important work to this day.

For the last 18 years Levinia held the position of Chief Executive Officer of the Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine (ASHM). During her tenure Levinia elevated the profile and breadth of ASHM through her professionalism, research insight and overall vision of the role the organisation would play both nationally and in the region.

“It is probably difficult to think of another person who has had the kind of influence that Levinia has had over the course of the last three decades of the epidemic,” said Chad Hughes, VAC President.

“Her career began at a time when there was little hope for people living with HIV and she was instrumental, not only in the areas of care and support for people living with HIV and AIDS but at important moments in prevention such as her role in the drafting of national guidelines for the provision of post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP).”

“Levinia’s commitment to the work of HIV and AIDS activism ranged from her roles in community based organisations, direct contact and care for people living with HIV and AIDS to high level collaboration with researchers, politicians and policy makers to advance HIV medicine in this country and the care and support of people living with the virus,” said Simon Ruth, VAC CEO.

“The range of Levinia’s research interests is formidable. She contributed to work on counselling, service capacity, combination therapy, health promotion and HIV and the law,” added Chad Hughes.

“At every level, her contribution furthered debate in substantive and important ways. Her leadership legacy is one of partnership, collaboration, vision and courage and in many ways she will be impossible to replace.”

Tribute

From Centre for Social Research in Health,
UNSW



CSRH mourns the loss of collaborator and friend Levinia Crooks

16 Oct 2017

Today the Centre for Social Research in Health (CSRH) mourns the loss of a long term collaborator and advocate for the rights of people living with HIV, viral hepatitis and STIs in Australia and the region.

Levinia Crooks AM was the Executive Officer of the Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine (ASHM) and an adjunct Associate Professor with CSRH.

Levinia dedicated her life to improving the lives of people affected by these infections by strengthening the skills and contributions of the health and medical workforce in these sectors.

She was a passionate and tireless champion and we will miss her enormously.

We send our best wishes to Levinia's family, friends and colleagues at this sad time.

Carla Treloar,
Director, Centre for Social Research in Health

Tribute

From [Kirby Institute, UNSW](#)



Kirby Institute pays tribute to the life and service of Levinia Crooks

16 October 2017

The Kirby Institute would like to pay tribute to the life and service of Adjunct Associate Professor Levinia Crooks AM, who sadly passed away overnight. Levinia was a dedicated leader in her role as CEO of the Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine (ASHM) for 18 years. We would like to take this opportunity to recognise her significant contribution to the HIV response in Australia and to the individual lives of people living with HIV.

Levinia was at the forefront of efforts to improve testing and treatment of HIV in Australia and Asia-Pacific since the 1980s, and the Kirby Institute and ASHM have enjoyed a collaborative working relationship during the early years of the HIV epidemic through to today. Her involvement in the HIV response spans the clinic, community and the research field, and it is through her vision and her collaborative spirit that she achieved so much.

Levinia leaves an important legacy as an advocate and as a leader in the effort to improve HIV testing and treatment in Australia. The Kirby Institute would like to join our colleagues at ASHM in celebrating the remarkable contribution and commitment of Levinia to the field of HIV advocacy, and extend our condolences and support to her family, and to Scott McGill and the team at ASHM during this difficult time.

Tribute

From **AIDS Action Council of ACT**



AIDS ACTION COUNCIL ACKNOWLEDGES THE SAD PASSING OF LEVINIA CROOKS

28 November 1960 – 16 October 2017

It is with great sadness that the Board, Staff and Volunteers of the AIDS Action Council of the ACT acknowledge the sad passing of Adjunct Associate Professor Levinia Crooks, AM on 16 October 2017 after a long and courageously fought illness. Levinia was 56 and is survived by her mother, Judy.

Levinia served for over 30 years as a champion for people's rights in the health sector. She began in the 1980s supporting her friends and colleagues impacted by HIV/AIDS, conducting social research to inform the development of counselling and support services for people living with HIV. She also served as President of the AIDS Council of NSW and Bobby Goldsmith Foundation, as well as on the Board of the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations. Levinia's dedication to and achievements in the fields of public health promotion and advocacy for people living with HIV/AIDS leaves an extensive legacy, with countless lives in our region touched by her energetic, pragmatic and brave approach.

She applied her considerable experience and skills to push for dramatic changes in the viral hepatitis response and greater attention to sexual health needs. Her drive and focus on the needs of the workforce in HIV, viral hepatitis and sexual health pioneered contributed to establishing ASHM as a provider of high quality resources and training. Throughout her career, Levinia wrote a wide range of educational resources and provided robust advocacy for many initiatives that resulted in increased access to HIV and viral hepatitis treatments.

In 2008 she was made a Member of the Order of Australia for her contribution to HIV policy, her care for people with HIV and her contribution to health generally. In 2015 she was further honoured with the ACON President's Award in recognition of a lifetime dedicated to improving the health and well-being of people affected by HIV and AIDS.

Farewell Levinia - you inspire us to continue your work and dedication.

Media Release

From **Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO)**



Vale Levinia Crooks, A Tireless Fighter in Australia's HIV/AIDS Response

16 October 2017

The Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO) is today paying tribute to Levinia Crooks, AM, a leading figure in Australia's HIV/AIDS response, who passed away over the weekend.

"Levinia was a giant of Australia's HIV/AIDS response and her loss is being deeply felt right across the sector," said Darryl O'Donnell, chief executive officer of AFAO.

"As CEO of ASHM, a position she held for 18 years, Levinia's efforts were crucial in supporting the health professionals who work in HIV.

"Under her leadership, ASHM has provided outstanding clinical leadership and support for Australia's workforce of HIV, viral hepatitis and sexual health clinicians.

"Her remarkable depth of knowledge made her a hugely effective figure throughout her long career. She had a unique capacity to bring people together to effect change.

"Levinia's leadership dates to the earliest years of Australia's HIV epidemic. She has been a carer, educator and leader in all aspects of the response.

"She is a former President and staff member of ACON and the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation, and in 2015 received ACON's highest honour, the President's Award, for her tireless contribution.

"Levinia was truly one of Australia's leading HIV advocates and our community will always owe her a debt of thanks for her work.

"Our thoughts today are with Levinia's family and with the many people who knew and loved her."

Tribute

From GESA



Vale Adjunct Associate Professor Levinia Crooks, AM

The Gastroenterological Society of Australia GESA's Australian Liver Association is deeply saddened by the loss of Associate Professor Levinia Crooks. Through her leadership of the Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine, she made an enormous contribution to expanding and educating the medical workforce caring for people living with hepatitis and HIV, for whom she was a tireless and effective advocate.

Your sincerely,

Professor Narci Teoh, Professor Alex Thompson

President GESA , Chair – Australian Liver Association

Tribute

From [Hepatitis Australia](#)



Levinia Crooks – RIP

12 October 2017

We are today mourning the loss of a great advocate and reflecting on the invaluable contributions of one of the country's most dedicated advocates. Adjunct Associate Professor Levinia Crooks, AM passed away today, 16 October 2017. After over three decades of work in the blood borne viruses sector including eighteen years with Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine (ASHM) Levinia resigned as CEO at the beginning of September of this year due to health concerns.

Levinia, who had been involved in the HIV movement since the 1980's was an unrelenting advocate for HIV and later broadened this focus to ensure the role of ASHM was expanded to include sexual health and viral hepatitis. Levinia was passionate about ensuring the health care workforce, both clinical and community based, was well informed and able to respond to the needs of people living with HIV and viral hepatitis. Most recently Levinia was focused on addressing HIV and hepatitis-related stigma and discrimination that occurs within health services.

Levinia's passion and dedication to improving the health outcomes of the community was unwavering, and her dedication and drive to achieve positive changes in the delivery of health services will be greatly missed.

The Hepatitis Australia Board and staff extend their condolences to Levinia's family and friends and pays tribute to her extraordinary leadership and achievements.

Andrew Little, Acting President, Hepatitis Australia

Tribute

From [Bobby Goldsmith Foundation](#)



Bobby Goldsmith Foundation honours Levinia Crooks

12 October 2017

It is with great sadness that we learn of the passing of Adjunct Associate Professor Levinia Crooks (AM).

Levinia was an extremely influential figure in the fight against HIV/AIDS and the commensurate medical and social challenges of the time. She was an outstanding leader in the sector and Bobby Goldsmith Foundation (BGF) was privileged to have her as its President between 1998 and 2000, and as Vice President until February 2005.

Prior to her Board roles, Levinia chaired two BGF sub-committees – the Client Services subcommittee and the Housing sub-committee, established in 1994. Importantly, as President of the BGF Supported Housing Project Inc. between 1995 and 1997, Levinia was instrumental in the conception and implementation of BG House where clients in critical stages of living with HIV were accommodated and supported by dedicated staff.

The House opened in 1997 and was just one example of her prescience. Eighteen years later when BG House closed, Levinia noted the positive impact that it had had on the lives of the many clients who had found a home there. Through her tireless work, Levinia personified so much of this progress.

Levinia's immeasurable contribution to BGF forms part of an incredible legacy that spans over 30 years' service to PLHIV. She served as President of the AIDS Council of NSW and was on the Board of the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations. For 18 years, she served as Chief Executive Officer of the Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine (ASHM). As one of Australia's leading HIV advocates, Levinia's compassion towards improving the lives of people living with HIV was truly remarkable. She will be fondly remembered and greatly missed.

BGF extends our deepest sympathies to Levinia's family and loved ones, and to the Board and staff of ASHM.

Vale Levinia Crooks

Lorraine Hill - President Nick Lawson - CEO Bobby Goldsmith Foundation

Letter of Condolence

From **Melanie Walker**

Chief Executive Officer

On behalf of the AIVL board, membership and staff



On behalf of the board, membership and staff for the Australian Injecting and Illicit Drug Users League (AIVL) I would like to express our deepest sympathies to the ASHM family on the passing of Adjunct Associate Professor Levinia Crooks, AM.

Levinia was front and centre of the HIV community response from the earliest days. An unwavering activist and humanitarian, Levinia always gave her best and fought her hardest – we were privileged to have her fighting with us.

Levinia was that rare community worker whose compassion and empathy ensured that everyone was included in her push for equal health and human rights for people at risk or living with HIV, HCV and STIs. In her very pragmatic way she quietly went about ensuring that ASHM – and any organisation she was involved with – worked to the highest standards and was inclusive of all communities, including our community – people who use drugs. Levinia always supported our rights and our call for a community – centred response to BBV transition.

Our people knew they could rely on Levinia to support them in meetings or forums on issues of parity and equity. Levinia was unwavering in her commitment to pursuing the goal of preventing the transmission of BBVs in stigmatised communities.

Levinia approached most problems or barriers as an intellectual exercise – she had a formidable contact lists that she used judiciously and an agile mind that she used relentlessly for the benefit of her community. She was highly regarded in our sector, very respected within our communities and she was much loved by many people from all those intersecting groups. She was loved in particular for her compassion and her fierce intellect, as well as her sense of humour and flashes of sardonic wit.

Australia and the global HIV/HCV communities have lost one of the most effective and compassionate people in our sector – it is a monumental loss. We hope the sector will uphold Levinia's legacy by continuing to demand high quality education for those involved in service provision, ensuring the principles of community participation are upheld and promoting compassion for people who use drugs.

We look forward to continuing to work closely with our friends at ASHM to keep Levinia's legacy alive. We owe it to that amazing and fearless woman who took us all into her heart.

Tribute

From Professor Brendan Murphy



Australian Government

Department of Health

Chief Medical Officer

Mr Scott McGill
CEO (A/g) and Division Manager
Australasian Society for HIV Medicine (ASHM)
Locked Mailbag 5057
DARLINGHURST NSW 1300

RECEIVED 29 JAN 2018

Dear Mr McGill

On behalf of the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee (AHPPC) I would like to offer my condolences on the death of Adjunct Associate Professor Levinia Crooks. Levinia was a long standing and valued member of the Blood Borne Viruses and Sexually Transmitted Infections Standing Committee (BBVSS) of the AHPPC.

As an active and passionate advocate, Levinia brought to BBVSS a perspective that spanned clinical, research and community fields. She was a leader in the HIV, viral hepatitis and sexual health sectors and her contributions, including to the writing groups for successive National Strategies, were highly valued. Her numerous achievements are a reflection of her dedication and leadership in improving the health and wellbeing of people affected by HIV and AIDS.

The AHPPC recently met and acknowledged Levinia's service. Our thoughts are with Levinia's family, friends and colleagues. I hope that you are able to find some comfort in Levinia's extraordinary contributions to the health protection of Australians.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'B. Murphy'.

Professor Brendan Murphy

22 January 2018

Tribute

From **Alison Verhoeven**

Chief Executive
Australia Healthcare and Hospital Association

Vale Levinia Crooks

It is with great sadness that the Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association (AHHA) expresses its condolences at the loss of Adjunct Associate Professor Levinia Crooks AM. Levinia was a tireless champion for the health sector, and her advocacy on behalf of the health workforce and people living with HIV and other blood-borne viruses has been valued immensely by her peers.

AHHA valued the opportunity to work closely with Levinia on a number of major projects, but we will best remember Levinia for her positivity, tenacity, and unwavering devotion to the improvement of the health sector and the care it provides to patients. Her support for the health workforce and her dedication to addressing systemic barriers and discrimination faced by people living with HIV and other blood-borne viruses have dramatically changed the Australian health landscape for the better.

Our thoughts are with Levinia's family, friends and colleagues. Her loss will be felt by us all.

Tribute

From **Carla Gorton**

Photo: Liz Dax, Phillip Cunningham, Levinia and Carla Gorton (September 2017)



I met Levinia in 2000, soon after she took the reins at ASHM, and it was immediately evident that she not only knew the HIV sector well but was greatly respected. Her work with Bobby Goldsmith Foundation and NSW health amongst many other organisations meant that she was as comfortable at a leather bar in Darlinghurst as at a meeting with the Health Minister.

Many people talk about Australia's partnership model but Levinia lived and breathed it and so many of us who work in the sector now met each other through meetings, events, symposiums, working groups, writing groups, advisory panels and other initiatives organised by Levinia. The term mentor doesn't seem enough to capture it – but she was that and more.

The six years I spent with her at ASHM are years I cherish. It was a privilege to spend time with her again in September this year. Levinia never gave up or opted out. She fought cancer as she fought every issue in life with scientific evidence, the best professional/clinical opinions, determination and a spiral ring folder with highlighter pens and coloured sticky notes keeping everything in order.

Levinia inspired confidence because she did her research and she got the key players on board and she dedicated an inordinate number of hours to preparation, discussions, negotiations, communication, generating ideas, documentation and reporting. She championed international work as much as a national response and was key to so many initiatives in our region. She was across everything – but she also made people feel appreciated and acknowledged. She was lively and fun to be with and I miss her with all my heart.

Carla Gorton

Tribute

From *HealthMap Project Team*

www.healthmapstudy.net.au
www.facebook.com/healthmapstudy

Dear colleagues,

Many of you will be aware of Levinia's passing. As but a small part of Levinia's overall contribution to the lives of people with HIV in Australia and elsewhere, Levinia was also a Chief Investigator and Steering Committee member of HealthMap. However, those titles do not convey the depth of contribution she made. From the earliest conversations, through significant contributions from ASHM to the grant proposal, to the gritty determination she displayed as we grappled with the challenges of the project, Levinia made a difference.

Personally, I will remember and value deeply the way that Levinia always had our back. Through the most difficult times, the commitment and support of Levinia was unerring.

So from all of us here at the HealthMap team, we join with our colleagues in mourning the loss of one of Australia's great champions and celebrate the incredible person Levinia was. She lives on with all of us and in the lives of people with HIV.

Our thoughts are with Judy, Levinia's mother, and with you all.

Julian

Tribute

From **David Menadue**

I met Levinia in the early days of NAPWHA then called the National People Living with AIDS Coalition or NPLWAC an acronym that raised a few eyebrows with bureaucrats in Canberra but which someone with Levinia's sense of humour would have been appreciated in those difficult days. Levinia was with us all the way on that journey even on the dance floors and watching out for the vulnerable amongst us at all times.

Her role with ASHM was extraordinary and essential — the HIV sector needed someone who knew the history and the landscape and could cope with the turbulence as well as maximise the positives when they came along.

One of the last things she did for me was to give me a free registration to last year's HIV Conference: a small gesture but to know she was in the background watching over things was always reassuring. Your legacy will live on Levinia and your friendship highly valued.

Thanks for being on the journey darling heart.

Tribute

From **Dr Jennifer Power**

Senior Research Fellow
Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La
Trobe University

I interviewed Levinia back in 2005 about her experiences as an HIV activist.

This quote from her interview speaks volumes about Levinia:

“It should never have been the case that there was a need to develop an organisation such as CSN (Community Support Network). [But] it was the case, it was definitely the case, that people were dying in their homes because [mainstream] home care wouldn’t come and look after them ... Yeah, a downright, flat out refusal to go and care for people ... Now in an environment like that you have to act!”

I think that was how she viewed her role in the HIV sector. You just had to do something. It was not a choice. She had to act! And ‘act’ she did!

Tribute

From **Carla Treloar**

Director, Centre for Social Research in Health;
Social Policy Research Centre

One of the first times I had opportunity to speak to Levinia one-on-one we were taking a long walk from a seminar room in a hospital to the ladies' toilets, and back. It was around the time that some changes had occurred in S100 prescribing regulations and I asked her something about the process. I thought this was going to be a brief exchange along the lines of "oh yes, it was a difficult process, lots of people needed to be involved etc". But no. In the 10-12 minutes that we were in company, including from within the cubicle, I had the most amazing lesson in negotiating with the Commonwealth government and various other stakeholders, the details of submission processes and so on. She had an incredible depth of knowledge and an overwhelming commitment to bring structural change that would profoundly impact the lives of people living with HIV.

In my last exchange with her, Levinia sent an email in August during her time in hospital. She penned a critique of registrars and residents practicing their questions to patients about their use of alcohol and other drug use. She had lots to say about the gaps and assumptions in their approach and the ways in training for medical students could be improved! Ever the social scientist, sharp observer of life, full of humour and defender of human rights and dignity.

Tribute

From **Dr Alec Ekeroma**

Honorary Chief Executive Officer, Pacific Society for Reproductive Health

Chief-in-Editor, Pacific Journal of Reproductive Health and the Pacific Health Dialog

Sad news about A/Prof Levinia Crooks

She was instrumental in building ASHM as an organisation supporting the HIV Workforce in Australasia including the Pacific version.

A few years back when I was President, she tried to have the Pacific HIV organisation merge with PSRH but both organisations did not agree with the arrangement

She however worked tirelessly in supporting Pacific workers with training workshops.

Those who work in the HIV area in the Pacific will know her well.

From **Dr P Heather Lyttle**

Public Health and Sexual Health Physician
Population Health

Oh – I am very sorry to hear this. What a shock. I didn't know she was unwell.

We will all miss her.

Regards

Heather Lyttle

Tribute

From **Denise Cummins**

Clinical Nurse Consultant
Community Nursing Service,
Community Health SLHD

Please pass on my thoughts to everyone at ASHM. It is a sad time and a great loss. Levinia will be truly missed!

Kind regards

Denise Cummins

From **Dr Matthew Thalanany**

Head of Sexual Health & Blood Borne Virus Unit
Centre for Disease Control
Department of Health
Northern Territory Government

We here at the Sexual Health & Blood Borne Virus Unit in the NT are truly saddened to learn of this news.

Levinia was a real friend to our Unit and we shall always remember with gratitude the staunch support she gave us.

Our condolences to her mother, and to the ASHM staff

Dr Matthew Thalanany

Tribute

From **Dr Nick M Dala**

National STI/HIV Program Manager
NDoH

It very sadden to hear of this tragic news. The late Professor Crooks was a very good friend to the HIV Program here and many professional colleges here will surely miss here.

We express our deepest sympathy and our thoughts are with her family at this time.

Wish the family and close friends well and May God continue to bless you all.

Dr Nick M Dala

From **Fiona Bailey**

Chief Executive Officer
Gastroenterological Society of Australia (GESA)

My thoughts and condolences to all Levinia's colleagues and her wonderful team at ASHM.

A tremendously dedicated advocate for the people of Australia.

Vale Levinia.

Tribute

From **Michael Grant**

GAICD Country Manager Australia
ViiV Healthcare

I am so saddened about this. Levinia was such a special person, strong leader. Her soul burned very bright. I am grateful for having had the chance to work with her, learn from her and get to know her.

She leaves a massive legacy and her work will live on through you and your organisation. We at ViiV Healthcare will never forget her achievements nor the value that you all bring.

I look forward to remembering her at commemorations.

Best wishes

Michael Grant

From **Manoji Gunathilake**

What a sad news, unbelievable may she rest in peace.

Thank you

Manoji Gunathilake

Tribute

From **Nancy Pego**

National Adolescent Health Coordinator/
Supervising Program Manager
Reproductive & Child Health Department
Ministry of Health & Medical Services
Honiara Solomon Islands

This is sad news for us Dr Alec,

May our Lord comfort her family and all at this time of great sorrow.

Kind regards

Nancy Pego

From **Michael West**

Sexual Health & Viral Hepatitis
Prevention, Population Health and Place Branch Health and
Wellbeing Division
Department of Health and Human Services

Sorry I haven't let you know how much I have admired your work before.

As an aside, I do have to laugh at memories on being on the sidelines watching you & Louise tussle issues during the lead up to AIDS 2014! Both formidable people.

Good luck with everything

Take care,
Michael

Tribute

From **Roy Starkey**

Client Services Officer
ACON Northern Rivers

I express my condolences to all who knew this wondrous woman.

Kind regards,
Roy Starkey

From **Teddy Cook**

Manager, Regional Outreach Development
ACON

Just wanted to send some love, hugs and thoughts to you today and to all at ASHM.
Levinia was an amazing woman and her legacy will never be forgotten.

All the best,
Teddy

Tribute

From **Dr NM Samuel**

ASAP and

CARE foundation

Sir/ Madam

I am devastated to have the news of passing away of Levinia.

I worked with her on several conference organising committees as IAS GC member and ASAP president.

She was a hard worker and committed to our region- Asia Pacific.

She was truly a global human being and was concerned about the issues of HIV/ AIDS and those infected and affected with HIV.

We will miss her.

May her soul rest in peace

Dr NM Samuel

Tribute

From **Jessica Michaels**

HIV and IDCP Program Manager
Division of Infectious Diseases
University Medicine Cluster,
National University Hospital



Levinia worked closely with myself, A/Prof Sophia Archuleta and Dr Dariusz Olszyna to develop the 1st Asia Pacific HIV Practice Course, which was run in Singapore from the 30th November to 4th December 2016. The course was developed to address the limited training opportunities for Nurses, Social Workers, Pharmacists, and other health care workers in the Asia Pacific Region who work in field of HIV. The course was attended by 48 healthcare workers from 6 different countries in the Asia Pacific Region.

We were lucky enough to have Levinia join us in Singapore as a course facilitator. Levinia was not only an incredible source of knowledge, guidance and support for the course participants but she was also a true collaborator and a seamless fit in our team.

The Singapore AIDS Conference was also held while Levinia was in Singapore. Levinia presented '*Getting then in the door: Increasing the uptake of HIV screening and testing*' during the 90-90-90 as a Framework for Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation session. Levinia's presentation was well received and her knowledge and experienced were evident during the panel discussion at the end of the session.

As a result of the success of the 1st Asia Pacific HIV Practice Course, we will be running the course on an annual basis, continuing our important partnership with ASHM. Levinia will be greatly missed as a member of our team.

Tribute

From **Lindsay Krassnitzer**

Associate Lecturer
Health Sciences College of Nursing & Health Sciences



My sincere condolences to everyone at ASHM and everyone whose lives Levinia touched over the years through her courage, determination and tireless commitment to social justice. I never met Levinia personally but admired her work and her words over many years. Just yesterday I gave a lecture on sexual health and referenced Levinia's words about sexual health, HIV and young people from World AIDS Day a few years ago.

Vale Levinia, your legacy lives on in the impact you made.

Warm regards,

Lindsay Krassnitzer

Tribute

From **Professor Neale Fong**

National President
ACHSM

On behalf of the Australasian College of Health Services Management (ACHSM) we are saddened to see the untimely passing of Levinia. We collaborated on the recent destigmatisation project with ASHM and her passion at last year's workshop, despite being unwell was unbridled. I personally have had a long association with Levinia through my role as director of the WA government HIV/AIDS clinic in Perth in the 1980's and through various times as Director General of WA Health.

A great person who will be sorely missed professionally and personally.

Prof. Neale Fong

Tribute

From **Dr Ajith Karawita**

Immediate past president of the
Sri Lanka College of Sexual Health and HIV Medicine

Levinia attended as guest of honour at the 20th annual scientific sessions of Sri Lanka College of Sexual Health and HIV Medicine (Sri Lanka CoSHH) held at Hilton Colombo in 2015.

From **Dr Ariyaratne, K.A.Manathunge**

Consultant Venereologist
Coordinator Strategic Information National STD/AIDS Control
Programme

Dear colleagues at ASHM,

This is a very very sad news which was never expected. Thank you Levinia for all the helps you did for Sri Lankan to enhance our understanding on HIV and Hepatitis related issue. We are very happy we managed to invite you to Sri Lanka as the chief guest for our Annual scientific sessions in 2015.

May you rest in peace!



Tribute

From **Jeffrey McMullen**

I remember Lavinia so well

I was at my first ASHM Conference and had not much idea what to do (which ain't unusual) and she time out of her schedule to explain how things worked. I then saw her again at other conferences and she remained her friendly self.

A truly great pioneer who put herself out there.

Thank You Lavinia



From **Deborah Bateson**

Medical Director, Family Planning NSW

Vale Levinia – it was an absolute pleasure and privilege to share these past few years with you on a personal and professional level – it is a testament to your many extraordinary qualities that ASHA has grown and matured into the exciting alliance it is today – your passion, your energy and most of all your vision for a better world free of sexual health inequalities will live on under the ASHA banner.

Tribute

From **Dr Ben Hanson**

Vale Levinia! Levinia achieved so much in her life and had a direct benefit on the lives of so many people. Her compassion for other people and unflagging determination, organizing skills and intelligence were such an inspiration. She was so kind and supportive to me personally and professionally over the years.

Levinia was a huge contrast to most other health administrators and bureaucrats of her time. She was in the community actively doing the things - often tackling the hard tasks and issues - that others just talked about, or blatantly ignored. Her track record of accomplishments speaks for itself.

I remember the first time I met her in 1999. At that time so many healthcare workers involved in the HIV/AIDS field were demoralised, burnt out and grieving for the loss of many patients, colleagues and friends. I know that Levinia herself had lost many friends in previous years.

She was a bright shining beacon of hope and enthusiasm at the time of the early triple ART therapies. She pushed so hard to develop coordinated HIV medicine training for doctors and other health care workers and later expanded to other blood borne viruses.

She was a vital influence in the development of healthcare policy and an enduring collaborative relationship with government, particularly NSW Health.

She encouraged collaboration between community, pharmaceutical, NGOs, and medical groups that led to much better communication and understanding of each other and better outcomes. She helped keep the coordinated focus on improving the lives of people living with HIV/aids, when there were several competing rival empires in the HIV field that sometimes seemed more interested in were each other for influence (and funding).

She was a key influence in developing aid programs and scholarships to assist people living with HIV in indigenous and nearby Asia-Pacific neighbouring communities. And so much more ... Thank-you Levinia and may you Rest In Peace.

Tribute

From **John McAllister**

Clinical Nurse Consultant HIV,
St. Vincent's Hospital, Darlinghurst

The first time I met Levinia was back in the late 90's. I was part of a working group for a project – it might have been around PEP or the PEP Hotline but I no longer recall. Levinia was in charge of the ubiquitous white board and as the meeting progressed it became covered in our thoughts, comments, contradictions and collaboration. It was a seemingly incomprehensible mess. Levinia brought the meeting to a close with a 5-minute summary that pulled, as if by magic, these disparate thoughts into a comprehensive project statement and plan. I was in awe.

Fast forward to a meeting earlier this year of The Scientific Meeting of the NSW HIV Prevention Partnership Project. Levinia joined the meeting by teleconference. She emailed me towards the end of the meeting and asked if I'd drop by and talk further with her about PrEP as a nurse led service. She was an inpatient in the hospital I work in.

I knew she'd been battling cancer but not quite how ill she was. We sat in a quiet area on the ward chaperoned by the infusion pump that was delivering her chemotherapy and chatted about PrEP, HIV nurses, life and the universe. I was in awe that even at the height of her personal fight and discomfort she continued to work and advocate for HIV care and prevention service provision.

Tribute

From **Julie Newman** ELS, CMPP

Senior Medical Manager HIV

I am so sad to hear of Levinia's passing. She was such a bright spark. I am sure you will all miss her terribly. I remember giving Levinia a big hug at last year's ASHM meeting and promising her that we would work more collaboratively with ASHM in the future. She'd be very happy to know that I'm keeping my promise. I hope she's on her way to a better place.

Sending you all good wishes. See you next month at the annual meeting.

From **Megan Phelps (CPC)**

Clinical Research Manager, Hepatology
Royal Adelaide Hospital

Levinia was very welcoming and supportive during my time as AHA President. I will remember her as we enjoyed an outdoor breakfast in Olive Pink Botanic Gardens and discussed collaborations between the AHA and ASHM and Aboriginal art.

Cheers
Megan

Tribute

From Limin Mao

I almost couldn't bring myself to do anything yesterday after hearing from this sad news (Levinia was still emailing Carla and me re: work just about a month and a half ago). Thanks to Carla to pass on our condolences in such a prompt way.

Levinia had been a personal mentor, colleague and friend to me for a long time. She was always such an aspiration. She was also an Adjunct A/Prof with CSRH.

Of course, just exactly as you said, she would want us to soldier on. There are already a few research-related activities that we have been planning with ASHM. From my side, we are planning for the next round ASHM Prescriber survey in 2018.

I am also helping Richard and Katy (cc-ed here) with some existing prescriber data. Katy also invited me to an ASHM Prescriber night (end of Oct.) and present on ART immediate initiation research-wise briefing.

Levinia's passion and tenacity are still with us and together we will continue to crack it.

Personally, I would also like to continue our friendship and support you guys here as my friends through this challenging period.

Tribute

From **Richard Hallinan**

SSWAHS

Levinia played a huge role through ASHM in getting hep C treatment made core business in general practice and AOD settings, since 2002. Though the success of this has been incomplete, the vision has been a great success where clinicians have risen to the challenge, and largely because of ASHM's enormous educational contribution over a decade and a half.

Hats off to a great woman, at the head of a great organisation.

From **Evy Yuniastuti**

Department of Internal Medicine University of Indonesia

My deepest condolence for Levinia, great and open-minded person. She has given many opportunities for young physicians in Asia Pacific learning about HIV and hepatitis.

Tribute

From **Ben Alfred**

Executive Officer
The University of Sydney School of Life
and Environmental Sciences

Hello, I like many people were saddened to hear that Levinia died. I first met Levinia in 1995 when I was working at BGF. At the time Levinia was working two days per week on what would eventually become Bobby Goldsmith House. I remember the first day we met as she bounded in the door talking her head off and a quick hi I am Levinia, it was a whirlwind of energy, passion and purpose.

As I was only 20 at the time, I was eager to learn and Levinia was very generous in providing advice, both solicited and un-solicited! She encouraged myself and others to participate in discussion and not be afraid to come up with ideas, and also was a great role model in terms of putting together arguments that supported your idea, was a dog with a bone approach that I am sure many others have experienced.

As I got to know her I was amazed at the way her mind worked, she seemed to have the background on all things to do with the epidemic as it was frequently called then— care and support, advocacy, policy, treatments— and more importantly she also had her eye on the future. It was incredible to be able to see such a smart woman in action, direct and to the point, but at the core was a drive to have organisations and individuals working together for better outcomes for people living with HIV/AIDS

Overtime began to appreciate that the death of so many friends had left a mark on her and I could see a sadness in her eyes on occasions, but I also saw how that translated in to action. She could at times be a little combative but prefer to describe her as crusty— gruff but lovable! I also had the pleasure of on quite a few occasions to have a “couple of drinks” in her company which I found it very difficult to maintain the pace.

As the night would wear on her sense of humour and wit really came to the fore. She was a pleasure to firstly observe and then get to know and like many others I grateful that I knew her. She won't be in heaven, so I can't say have fun up there, just happy that I knew her.

Tribute

From **Edward Reis**

I met Levinia almost twenty years ago; at meetings and workshops we attended through our respective jobs. I liked that she was smart, passionate and articulate. And funny. One day after one of those meetings she stayed back and quietly asked me if I would like to come and work with her. She had just taken over this small organisation and she thought it had lots of potential and it would be challenging and stimulating. And fun. I was taken by surprise but feeling disillusioned after going through a national HIV policy review and writing a new strategy on the side of government. The force of compromise. So I went by after work and got records of business, budgets, activity plans and proposals and sat on the floor in my room with a glass of red wine and read these over a few nights. She was right. It was challenging and stimulating and it would be fun. I went for the job and got it on my birthday.

We worked together for seventeen years and in that time she was my mentor, my colleague, my boss and my friend. She made me want to work hard and she gave me the space and the opportunity to learn and try new ideas and projects. Over those years that small organisation would grow into a significant and well respected society constantly motivated by Levinia's integrity and energy. My international connections stayed with me from earlier jobs and she let me take up consultancies with UNAIDS, WHO and AusAID and we used these contacts and opportunities to build what would become ASHM's international program. She gave me the chance to build something we would be proud of. She made me International Manager and her Deputy CEO. Her respect was something I have always valued.

Four years ago a stroke derailed my life. Levinia stuck by me through a long and what seems like never-ending recuperation. She came to the hospital and worked with my doctors and therapists to develop a return to work plan they hoped I could manage. When I couldn't manage this she still stuck by me and saw me into a role I can handle. Her loyalty was humbling and very very special.

I had some great times with Levinia. We went to good conferences, ate in good restaurants, drank good wine, had good ideas. We used to meet for breakfast Friday mornings, when we would plan and plot and ponder the ways of ASHM and our colleague organisations. She made me think and she made me laugh and sometimes she made me as mad as hell but I loved working with her and I shall miss her for a very long time.

Tribute

From **Dr Alex Wodak AM**

Emeritus Consultant,
Alcohol and Drug Service,
St Vincent's Hospital

Visiting Fellow, Kirby Institute, UNSW

President, Australian Drug Law Reform Foundation

In 1988 (I think) I attended the international AIDS meeting in Stockholm. While walking around the exhibition area I came across a booth for an organisation for Swedish Doctors working in AIDS. I immediately realised that Australia needed such an organisation. I knew from my own work as a doctor in the alcohol and drug field how hard it is to keep going in a low status area of medicine. I knew that the stigma and discrimination experienced by people with alcohol and drug problems transferred to clinicians who try to help people struggling with alcohol and drug problems. I knew that doctors working in AIDS in Australia would face similar problems.

On the plane travelling back to Australia I spoke to John Ziegler about this. He involved Graham Stewart. The three of us started working towards what later became ASHM. The organisation was established in 1989.

Levinia became the CEO of ASHM when it was only a couple of years old. But once Levinia was the CEO, there was no stopping the organisation. It just grew and grew. Got better better. Levinia was clearly a very capable CEO.

But Levinia was also a very remarkable person. She always seemed to have time for people. She valued people. She was kind enough to go out of her way to make sure that people knew that she valued their work. I tried to do the same for her. Now I wish I had been more effective in letting her know how much she was valued. Not just by me.

It was clear that for many years she didn't enjoy great health. But never a word of complaint.

I am sure I am one of many people whose lives were touched and enriched by Levinia and her selflessness. Her common sense. Her reasonableness.

ASHM was Levinia's life's work and what an amazing organisation she has built up!

I hope she will go on to inspire many people in the years ahead.

Levinia I feel privileged to have known you.

Farewell my friend.

Tribute

From **Robert Batey AM**

Clinical Professor of Medicine
University of Sydney, NSW

Professorial Fellow
Flinders University at Department of Medicine
Alice Springs Hospital, NT

Levinia has been an amazing influence for good in my own life and she will be sorely missed by me and my wife Adrienne. It was Levinia who first showed the pair of us around Alice Springs 12 years ago on a trip to discuss hepatitis in Central Australia. Her passion for the place and the great road trip we did prior to hopping on the 5 pm flight to Darwin had a lasting impact on our lives. When I was subsequently asked by NT Health if I would consider doing HCV clinics in Alice, the unhesitating reply was YES.

I often wonder whether she put the NT up to asking me!

Levinia helped me to see more clearly the need for a broader approach to the National response to HCV and HBV and her invite to serve as the Viral Hepatitis Advisor to ASHM for several years gave me great challenges and much satisfaction.

It was Levinia's amazing networking skills that made her so successful as the CEO of ASHM. She just knew who would be able to move along at State, Federal and International levels. She was untiring and always positive about what could and subsequently would be possible!

And she loved caring for her team, bringing in food including homemade cheeses, much to everyone's delight.

She grew the Educational arm of ASHM dramatically in more recent years and her vision for the International section of ASHM was inspirational. I certainly benefited from ASHM's links with Indonesia, Malaysia, Cambodia and Vietnam.

Levinia had a great heart and a huge energy. Her passing leaves a major hole in the BBV arena and far beyond.

Thank you Levinia for all you did for me.

Tribute

From **Craig Rodgers**

Hello there

My name is Craig Rodgers and would like to express my great appreciation for Levinia's work. We first met when she was conducting an HIV prescriber course in Kings Cross in 1999 and this began my long association with ASHM as a contributor to their HIV training and culmination in my work as a Clinical Advisor.

Levinia was always supportive and encouraging of my work and involvement in HIV for which I was extremely grateful and by having her respect within a very talented field of clinicians to choose from made me feel quite 'special'.

Only a few weeks before she passed I saw her in St Vincent's hospital and we commented on just how much she had achieved, especially my personal 'bug bear' for years of having free medication for patients.

It's such a shame that she has gone so early and not had the chance to enjoy observing her widespread achievements.

She has contributed so greatly to making living with HIV in Australia an example to the rest of the world.

Tribute

From **David Crawford RN**

Treatments Officer
Positive Life NSW

I was deeply saddened to learn of the passing of Levinia Crooks. Both professionally and personally as a person living with HIV her legacy of tireless work, the visionary leadership, and her courage have very few bench marks for us as a community worldwide. Without her insight we would not have the exemplary and international renown standard and access to care that is afforded to us today in Australia.

Her determination and unyielding fight for change even until recently with a program to address stigma and discrimination within the broader health care sector on our behalf will undoubtedly add to what has been a volume of work that only a legend could have achieved. I will miss her invaluable guidance, knowledge and direction in all that related to HIV medicine. My condolences to my friends, colleagues and staff at ASHM.

Tribute

From **Enaam Oudih**

Practice Manager
Multicultural Services Manager BBV programs
Manager Multicultural Gambling Help Service

First of all I send everyone at ASHM our heartfelt sympathy for your great loss.

Levinia was a great and warm person, always had special ears to listen to the voices of CALD communities that I represent in SA. No matter how critical and frustrated I was, she made sure that she listened to me, she engaged meaningfully and made me feel valued. I will miss her terribly in the sector. Rest in peace Levinia

From **Graham Brown**

Senior Research Fellow
Australian Research Centre in Sex Health and Society
La Trobe University

Levinia has impacted directly on so many of us.

Vale Levinia Crooks - an incredible advocate who has achieved more than enough change in the world for three lifetimes and yet it still feels painfully early for you to leave us. A hero, a trouble maker, a deal maker, a victory maker and a peace maker.

You are deeply missed.

Tribute

From: Staff member

BURNET INSTITUTE

Associate Professor Crooks served for over 30 years as a champion for people's rights in the health sector, supporting friends and colleagues impacted by HIV and AIDS in the 1980s, and conducting social research to inform development of counselling and support services for people living with HIV.

She was always inclusive, and supported and promoted the dignity of others. As an advocate she was optimistic and inspiring and never held back by the expectations of governments or other donors.

Associate Professor Crooks always thought globally but from a sense of what mattered, not from personal ambition. She could work in inclusive ways with the poorest, the sickest and the excluded, but also with governments, health workers, researchers and big pharmaceutical companies.

She was determined and competent in every professional task she took on and was central to many partnership endeavours.

Associate Professor Crooks also served as President of the AIDS Council of NSW (ACON) and Bobby Goldsmith Foundation, as well as on the Board of the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations. She has written a wide range of educational resources and provided robust advocacy for many initiatives that resulted in increased access to HIV and viral hepatitis treatments.

Tribute

From: Staff member

BURNET INSTITUTE

In 2008 she was made a Member of the Order of Australia for her contribution to HIV policy, her care for people with HIV and her contribution to health generally. In 2015 she was further honoured with ACON's President's Award, in recognition of a lifetime dedicated to improving the health and well-being of people affected by HIV and AIDS.

ASHM said: "Levinia leaves us all a major and extensive legacy to carry forward and build upon, with countless lives in our region positively impacted by her energetic, pragmatic, visionary, brave and can-do approach.

"She will be remembered as a warm and generous friend to so many, ready to roll her sleeves up, get on with the work at hand and bring her formidable intelligence, wit and problem-solving abilities to the table."

Tribute

From **SWHIV**

On behalf of SWHIV (Social Worker in HIV), formerly known as SWAIDS, we would like to acknowledge the sad passing of Levinia Crooks.

Historically, SWAIDS was established in the 1980's to provide advocacy for clients and communities affected by HIV/AIDS and provide professional support to social workers working in the sector.

Levinia, in her role at ASHM, supported SWAIDS in maintaining a focus on psychosocial wellbeing and ensuring specialist allied health services could provide support for people living with HIV/AIDS, as the early models of care improved with better medication.

She invited SWAIDS to provide a bi-monthly update to their newsletter, of relevant issues to address for the attention of ASHM members.

We admire and acknowledge Levinia for her incredible and relentless commitment to advancing the field of HIV and promoting the health of affected communities. She built the resilience and the capacity of the sector by ensuring community access to a wide range of service supports and promoting multidisciplinary engagement in training and conferences for the workers.

Kind regards,

John Coady, Lisa McCann, Richard Riley

Tribute

From **Paul Lehmann**

Australian High Commissioner to Nigeria
Commonwealth Department of Health 1998 - 2002

Dear ASHM

It is with enormous sadness that I read of the recent passing of Adjunct Associate Professor Levinia Crooks, AM. It has been well over a decade and a half since I last worked with Levinia, but my fond memories of Levinia are no less resonate for the passage of time.

Beyond her well known professional competencies, subject matter knowledge and passionate commitment to her work at ASHM and elsewhere, it was Levinia's ability to connect with people on a personal level that set her apart. Levinia seemed to know instinctively that professional relationships were always also relationships between people – real human beings. She made these relationships work so well by generously and unpretentiously giving of herself. Levinia's considerate nature, humour and warmth were steadfast; no matter the meeting or chore at hand, if Levinia were present it seemed so much less like work and progress just happened. My relationship with Levinia was mainly professional, but it is a mark of our loss that such a label hardly matters at this time of loss. She will be deeply missed.

Tribute

From **Professor John B. Ziegler AM**

Department of Immunology & Infectious Diseases
Sydney Children's Hospital

I'm probably one of the few people who spanned the whole ASHM career of Levinia and like everyone else am devastated by her passing and sad that she suffered so much.

Levinia had an enormous impact and it was under her guidance that ASHM became what it is today. She impressed as an extremely capable person with the dedication and collegiality that allowed the collaborations to develop and for ASHM to grow to what it is today.

Levinia will be sorely missed.

Please let me know when there is an opportunity for her Sydney colleagues to gather together to remember her.

Many thanks

John

Tribute

From **Lisa Bastian**

Manager
Sexual Health & Blood-borne Virus Program Communicable
Disease Control Directorate
Public Health Division,
WA Department of Health

I'd like to submit some thoughts about Levinia.

One of my first contacts with Levinia was about 10 years ago when she was in Perth for several days running a training program and attending meetings with WA organisations and stake holders. Levinia had booked into an apartment-style accommodation and in the few days she was here, Levinia managed to host a gourmet 'home-cooked meal' for several people and made jars of strawberry jam to give away. It was the first of many acts of warmth and generosity that Levinia extended to people and colleagues that I observed of Lev. From a work perspective, Levinia was always interested in what was happening in WA, she was a great advocate for the work done here and ensured that the WA perspective was invited into the national discussion. I learnt so much from watching how Levinia managed her way through challenging problems, always with the intent of getting a better health outcome or improve accessibility to healthcare. I will always be grateful for her mentorship, and most importantly, her support and friendship. I feel privileged to have known Levinia and I will miss her greatly.

Tribute

From **Professor Neil Drew FAPS**

Director – Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet
Edith Cowan University

It was with great sadness that we learned of the passing of Associate Professor Levinia Crooks. The Health*InfoNet* is a very proud long term partnering organisation with ASHM and Levinia's achievements are remarkable. We extend our sincere condolences to family, colleagues, friends and other loved ones.

Sincerely,

Neil Drew and staff of the Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet

From **Richard**

Levinia played a huge role through ASHM in getting hep C treatment made core business in general practice and AOD settings, since 2002. Though the success of this has been incomplete, the vision has been a great success where clinicians have risen to the challenge, and largely because of ASHM's enormous educational contribution over a decade and a half.

Hats off to a great woman, at the head of a great organisation.

Kind regards
Richard

Tribute

From **Richard Keane**

President Living Positive Victoria

I have known Levinia for 27 years. She was particularly close to my Partner Bill Hathaway in the 1990's Pre AART era, and spoke at his funeral about their and work together in AIDS activism and called the many people there on that day to action to continue the work he and so many other PLHIV had begun in those early years.

She fought for the greater and meaningful involvement of People Living with HIV and AIDS before it was even a concept and recognized the lived experience of PLHIV as being both central and equally valid as any other experts in the response and used her considerable influence to make room for us to have a voice at the table in Community led response to HIV.

She helped us build our own capacity and define our relevance to participate at every level of the response to HIV in this country. She did this because she believed this to be essential.

Sitting along side her at the closing plenary session of Last years ASHM conference in Adelaide was one of those amazing and very personal "full circle" moments in my life and a "special" highlight of my many years of engagement in the response which I will never forget and hold dearly both today and into the future.

Intelligent, insightful, strategic and determined. She was a kick ass activist and ally for the positive community. She will never be forgotten. VALE Levinia Crooks

Tribute

From **Nguyen Thi Hoai Dung**

National Hospital for Tropical Diseases
Secretary General
Viet Nam Clinical HIV/AIDS Society

Dear members of family Professor Levinia Crooks and of ASHM.

Dr Kinh – Chairman of Vietnam clinical HIV/AIDS societal and our members of VCHAS are extremely touched to hear about the passing of Professor Levinia Crooks. It must be a shock for her family and ASHM . She was such a kind and the strongest leader of ASHM. I have respected her because only a action she made " when we had a meeting of making plan for VCHAS in Sydney office, before she had gone on business she came to our meeting room, and said goodbye us" . At that time, It made me to admire her because she was a big boss, but she was friendly and polite to her staffs and partner.

May God Bless her family and ASHM during this time and always.

Tribute

From **Tracy**

I send you, with sadness, my condolences. I'll be toasting her this evening, We had many good times together and I'm glad that the last time I saw her, I got her a bit tipsy.

From **Anonymous**

I remember Lavinia so well

I was at my first ASHM Conference and had not much idea what to do (which ain't unusual) and she time out of her schedule to explain how things worked. I then saw her again at other conferences and she remained her friendly self.

A truly great pioneer who put herself out there.

Thank You Lavinia



Tribute

From **Vicky Fisher**

It was 2003 and ASHM was advertising for a Publications Officer. I had been in Australia for 8 months and was deciding to stay and not return to London. Levinia gave me my first proper job in Australia, for which I am forever grateful. I learnt a lot in that job: about HIV, hepatitis, Australia, PNG.

ASHM was on the corner of Crown and Albion in those days, and we had a central open courtyard where we often had staff lunches and drinks.

Levinia was friendly, funny and very kind. And determined. I remember our conversations were often about food, cooking, clothes (especially coats and wools) and shoes.

Tribute

From **Jennifer Needham**



From **Sukhontha**

Vale Adjunct Associate Professor Levinia Crooks, AM

With sincere condolences to all family and colleagues on the passing of Levinia.

Thoughts are with you all at this time, my apologies for the delay as I have been away.

Warm regards
Jennifer Needham

My deepest condolences – Levinia was a giant in the response to HIV and AIDS and many many people will miss her.

Tribute

From Simon Collins

HIV I-Base

Hi

It is with great sadness that I just heard the news about Levinia.

When we had the chance to meet - usually at international conferences, Levinia's energy, enthusiasm and directness in getting the best care for people always shone through. It was always a real pleasure to have a chance to talk. Australia was lucky to have had such an inspirational doctor and activist leading the ASHM.

With deep condolences for your loss.

Best wishes

Simon Collins,
HIV i-Base,
London

.....

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Tribute

From **Diana Heatherich**

I only met Levinia fairly recently when working with her to deliver a program at La Trobe University prior to the 20th International AIDS Conference in Melbourne in 2014. She was outstanding on so many levels and I will not forget her. I feel privileged that I did get to meet and work with her.

From **Cathy Murphy**

Levinia is truly one of the heroes of the Australia health system. Her determination, hard work and principled decision-making leave a lasting legacy. RIP Levinia.

From **Anonymous**

This is fitting tribute. I will miss Levinia so much. Her vigour for planning and executing all things to do with ASHM and all people she brought together to accomplish its work will be very difficult to replace and continue so comprehensively. Vale, Levinia.

From **Ronald McCoy**

Thank you so much, Sharon. Levinia was amazing, helped so many and was a wonderful person. I will really miss her.

From **Virginia Furner**

Thank you Sharon for those wonderful, most appropriate words. We will all miss our friend and colleague enormously. Her legacy will never be forgotten.

From **Hugh Taylor**

This is a wonderful tribute to Levinia an outstanding leader and contributor who has left a lasting legacy.

Tribute

From Michael Levy;

Fatima Patel Mediscript

Loss of a Friend ANITA DE, ex-SYDNEY
Hon Director Sydney SHC — 1984, 1984-1990
Fare, Sydney SHC
Fond memory of Levina — ANITA 1990 → ..

Michael Levy - Thank you Levina for your gifts to
a better world.

May you rest in peace. Thank you for the opportunity
to partner Journal of Virus Eradication with ASHM.
Only sorry to have had such a short acquaintance.
Fond memories. Fatima Patel - Mediscript.

Tribute

From

Barry Blond Sydney

David

Martyn French, WA

Terry Fairclough

Liz Crock

Tracy Jones

Andrew

Barry Blond Sydney. Thanks for all the work
you have done. You will not be forgotten
We miss you! David

Thank you for being an exceptional colleague and friend
Martyn French, WA.

Your spirit is with us. Thanks for your mentoring,
inspiration & friendship. Liz Crock, Victoria,

Best memories and inspiration — Terry Fairclough

You left the world a better place Victoria, so
thanks for all you did. Your legacy continues Andrew.
You were inspirational in every way Tracy Jones

Tribute


From

Deborah

Judy Frecker

Louise Owen

Thank you for everything, Levina. What a delight to get to know you over the past few years. It was your support for all things collaborative & good was an inspiration. Your legacy continues. Miss you Deborah.

Just learning about your bravery + passion.
Peace 

A great loss, sadly missed. Judy Frecker
Thank you Levina for sharing your wisdom, guidance, enthusiasm & amazing organizational skills showing what is possible! Let's hope we can continue this amazing work.
Louise Owen

You are simply missed Levina. Your legacy will however remain with us for ever.
Priscilla

Tribute

From

Rebecca

Judy Frecker,

Richard (SWHIV)

Carole

Levinia, you are sorely missed. You were an inspirational boss and colleague. May you
rest in Peace. Rebecca.
Levinia, much loved, sadly missed,
an enormous contribution, with love
on behalf of ANZANC (HIV Nurse) Thankyou
for all your support. ~~she~~ will be greatly
missed. President Orlie Frecker.

Levinia, we will miss you terribly. Your mentoring, encouragement

and support will never be forgotten. Rest in Peace. Carole.

Levinia, you are remembered and acknowledged for your
persistence, energy, care for positive people and your influence in
setting up so many structures and supportive services ~ Richard for
SWHIV (Social Workers in HIV)

Tribute

From

Karen Price (ACON)

Damian Purcell

Levinia - After an ACON Conference once, you + I sat next to each other on the flight home. Spending those hours with you + getting to know you a bit better laid a foundation for not only a beautiful working relationship, but my respect + admiration for all you've done. Perseverance, intelligence, humour + always willing to speak up. You remain (& always will) one of my "Heros" - go peacefully. With love + deep respect - Karen Price - ACON.

One of a Kind, May your leadership continue to inspire others to achieve greatness and change. ~~Me~~ ~~Feel~~ Levinia, You were an inspiration & a motivator extraordinaire! We miss you but deeply appreciate the time we had with you! - So glad to have the chance to know you as a friend. - Damian Purcell

Tribute

From

Vicki-Russell Waddell

Roger Garcia

Hellen Henzell

Levinia, always remembered with love (♥) Vicki-Russell Waddell

Levinia, you have been just about everything to everyone you have worked with and for, Blessed with an amazing gift for finding common ground you brought people and organisations together like no-one else I can recall. Missed greatly already but never to be forgotten

Roger Garcia

Levinia - you have been the face of ASHM for so many of us. Tina Price et al. What a marvellous force for good & your legacy will live on. Hellen Henzell

Tribute

From

Arun Menon

Edwina Wright

Sarah

Lannia

Lisa Bastian

A woman of strength & courage. Deeply missed. Angela.
Much of the PNG work would not have been possible without you. Arun.
Thanks for everything, you wonderful woman! Edwina Wright
You are remembered for so many things, & sometimes the best words are just simple: Thankyou. Sarah.
You have been an amazing leader - who managed to extend your services beyond Australia to widen the services. Rest in Peace - Lannia.
Linnia - you have been a wonderful colleague, friend & mentor. I will miss you! Your support for the work in WA will always be valued & remembered.

Tribute

From

David Buchanan

Douglas Knox

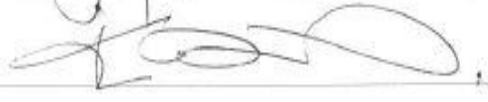
Julie L

Words will never be enough to explain nor show appreciation for the affect your presence on this earth has had. So, quite simply, thank you!!

Yours ~~xxx~~

With all my love + enormous respect: David Buchanan

Thank you, Levinia, for everything Douglas Knox

Dear Levinia - what energy, what commitment, irreplaceable. 

Such energy, drive, commitment + passion to the wellbeing of affected communities - a social justice champion. Julie let Levinia - when only a few recognised the needs of the HN, mentally ill homeless people - you were there. On behalf of all these people you

Tribute

From

Mary-Kate Pickett

Kim & Kerry

will never be forgotten & dearly missed.. *Kim*
WE WILL MISS YOU & YOUR FANTASTIC ENERGY TREATING US
With much love, fabulous memories & sadness & XOXO *Goodwin*
You are irreplaceable. And so very much missed but the work
you did is an extraordinary legacy which benefits so many. *Collette*
Best friend & Mary-Kate Pickett
LUCKY TO HAVE KNOWN YOU LEVINIA, *John*
Such an inspirational woman. *Kim John*
A champion, a compassionate person, always willing to
pitch in and do the work to progress the cause ^{sadly} missed
Kerry

Tribute

From

Jo M

Dejay Tobonek

Cipri Martinez

Thank you for all you've done Levinia,
your inspiration, care + compassion. I will
remember always for children.

Thank you for the huge contribution you made to
our lives & the inspiration you were personally to us.
Remembering all the amazing work you drove Dejay Tobonek
thanks Levinia for inspiring through action. Ben

Dear Levinia thank you for counseling me and
help me love myself more deeply. Cipri Martinez

Tribute

From Cammi

Dear Lev,

I just wish I had known you were sick so that I could have said thank you. Thank you for taking me under your wing when I was 22 (15 years ago!) & believing in me, thanks for encouraging me for taking whatever opportunities I could, even when they took me away from BHM, thanks for giving me work whenever I needed it, & for being understanding. You were tough, relentless, formidable, etc, but you were kind. Thank you for having a vision & pursuing it. Your courage is inspirational. XX Cammi

Tribute

From Paula

Levinia, you were not only my
mentor professionally but you
also helped me out personally
when you opened your home to
me. I learned so much from
you. I will always cherish the
~~the~~ time I spent with you.
You are sorely missed.

- Paula

Paula Runnels

Tribute

From Rachel Denesseux

Dear Lenina,

I learnt so very much from you and will always ~~be~~ remember the faith you showed in me and my abilities, and support you gave to my career.

You were a force to be reckoned with, and your heart was always in the right place. I'm sure you don't realise how many people's lives you changed for the better.

Wishing you peace. With love

Rachel Denesseux (née Peel)

XX

Tribute

From Liza

Dear Leviaia,
What to say!? Our catch-up 3 weeks ago
will stay with me forever - as will the
infinite knowledge, vision, passion,
pragmatic and strategic strat-
egies I was fortunate to
witness & learn from.
I will hold the 'Astrin' family dear
- and know that all of us will
never forget the incredible &
inspiring women you were.
Will miss you, Liza xx

Tribute

From Emily Wheeler

Dear Leanne,

You and ASTIM have shaped me personally and professionally, more than I could ever have imagined. In writing this at a Darlinghurst pub, after sharing a drink in your honour with about 40 old and current ASTIM staff. The impact you had on us all brought us all together today - to laugh, share stories and to reflect on the intense and bonding ASTIM experience. If you had been here, you would have enjoyed the wine aged for a short time, then headed back to the office to keep working... I hope you would have been happy you brought us all together. I feel your spirit here.

Love Emily Wheeler!

Tribute

From Hiba Jebeile

Dear Lennia,

To this day your mentorship, leadership and absolute inspiration continues to influence my work and life. Our many years working together have shaped much of my work today and I will be eternally grateful for your support and guidance and the confidence you have given me. I always miss my time at ASHM and your time together. You will be missed!

Hiba Jebeile xx

Tribute

From Kate Ross

Dearest Lewin,

From the moment I stepped into the doors at ASHM you became a huge inspiration to me. You were an amazing leader & guiding voice in all of our work.

I will be forever grateful for the years we worked together. Thank you

for allowing me into the ASHM family & for your mentorship & guidance.

I hope that I can make an impact in the world ~~that~~ in the same way that you have.

You changed HIV/Viral Hepatitis & Sexual Health care in this

country & region & your impact will never be forgotten.

You will be forever be an inspiration to me.

xx Kate Ross

Tribute

From

Ally

Limin Mao

John Peacock

Levinia,

Thank you for your tireless advocacy, passion for change and guidance. Your impact on HIV + SRH will be remembered for many years to come.

Rest in peace,

♥ Ally xx

Levinia: The show goes on.... we miss you.

Love Limin Mao

Dear Levinia,

The associations sector is lesser with your passing. Your energy and dedication to your cause was inspirational. Sincerely,
John Peacock

Tribute

From

Craig Rogers

Regina

Dear Levinia

Thank you so much for your support, encouragement
of & belief in my skills & career. You were an
inspirational force to me and many others &
your incredible work will provide benefits for so many
people for years to come! Love Craig Rogers

Thanks for your well spent life, Levinia. It was a
pleasure to know you. With love, Regina

Tribute

From

Justin Koonen (ACON)

Bill Baten

Dear Lennu,

Thank you for everything you have done for ASTIM, ACON, and our community. Yours are big shoes to fill, and we miss you and your contributions dearly.

With Love,

Justin Koonen & the ACON Team

Dear Lennu,

Your contribution to the fistball + global HIV/AIDS response was supelative. You were an inspiration to many generations of activists - and you did a wonderful job with ASTIM. I miss you.

Bill Baten

Tribute

From

David Crawford

Anonymous

Ostap

Cherie

David Crawford, she has left an immense legacy.

her legacy work & contributions are always remembered. We miss you, Leukia.

Best Boss ever. Amazing Dedication and life-like! Miss you very much!

Ostap

Inspirational, motivating, fearless and all kinds of comical. One of a kind who would always call the elephant in the room. You will be missed! Cherie xxx

Commemoration



Written by Dr Edwina Wright

Presented at the
Australasian HIV&AIDS Conference
on 6 November 2017

[Download the full speech](#)

[Listen to the audio recording](#)

Good morning

I would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of this Land and the Elders Past and Present. I would also like to acknowledge that we do not yet have a Treaty with the First Peoples of this country.

I would like also to acknowledge Levinia's mother, Mrs Judy Jackson and Levinia's close friend Mr Richard D'Apice who are both here at this morning's plenary.

It's an honour to have been invited to give this Commemoration for Levinia Crooks.

But in doing so I am keenly aware that I will be contravening one of the chief rules of engagement with Levinia – which was to NOT sing her praises, or make a fuss of her - because that would make her feel very uncomfortable. At the root of this discomfort, I believe, was her enduring modesty, which I think you can see here in this photo of her taken in 2015 following a lecture she gave at a scientific meeting in Sri Lanka.

Commemoration

Written by Dr Edwina Wright

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Adj A/Prof Levinia Crooks AM

Chief Executive Officer

Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine (ASHM)

Adj A/Prof. Public Health and Human Biosciences, La Trobe University

Adj A/Prof. Centre for Social Research in Health, University of New South Wales

It was both her modesty and her willpower that produced her challenging mandate that after her death, there was to be no funeral or memorial service in her honour. Thereby Levinia has challenged us to come to terms with her loss in an unconventional way, a funeral, which is not easy.

Levinia was born in NSW in November 1960 and was the only child of her parents, Judy and David. She attended Lilli Pilli primary school and then went on to Caringbah High School. Judy recounted to me that when Levinia was aged 4, each weeknight she would drag her little cane chair over to the television to watch Professor Julius Sumner Miller's program "Why is it so?" This was an early sign of her curious mind and her great love of learning, both of which saw her excelling at school.

Levinia attended the University of Wollongong where she undertook a Bachelor of Arts degree majoring with Honours in psychology. Later, in 2013 she received an MBA from the University of New England.

In 2008 she was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in recognition of her service in the area of HIV and AIDS. Here she is receiving the order with Dame Marie Bashir.

Subsequently, Levinia was awarded Adjunct Associate Professorships at Latrobe University and the University of New South Wales and I remember having to badger her to put her Adjunct positions on her email signature and thankfully, as you can see here, she finally capitulated, as you can see here (left).

Commemoration

Written by Dr Edwina Wright

Presented at the
Australasian HIV&AIDS Conference
on 6 November 2017

[Download the full speech](#)

[Listen to the audio recording](#)



Following her graduation from the University of Wollongong in 1984, Levinia worked at the Psychology Department at the University and stayed there until 1990. And the Psychology Department was very fortunate for they had landed an incredibly intelligent, hard working young woman who was 4 strongly committed to equity and social justice, was a highly strategic thinker with a formidable memory and an extraordinary capacity to understand and explain technical details. And here is a portrait of her from that time as a young woman.



During her six years at the University Levinia took on and managed the Wollongong AIDS Research Project Here is a photo of Levinia at the 5th International conference on AIDS in Montreal in 1989 beside a poster of her work from University of Wollongong.

Commemoration

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Then for nine years during the 1990s, Levinia held a number of positions in NSW working in the area of HIV/AIDS with both community organisations and the State Government. During this time she served as Vice-President of AFAO, President of ACON and President of the Bobby Goldsmith Foundation.

In this photo from this period, what I believe you can see here are several of Levinia's defining features: her kindness, her light touch when it came to offering consolation or support and her natural activism – in this photo she is the one taking action – she's on the phone, sorting something out- heaven's know what- all the while being tender and very present to her friend or perhaps, co-worker in the photo.



Here she is again with a mischievous look – my best guess is that she has just hatched a plan to secure some funding for a new project because as you know, she always managed to pull funding out of thin air!

Commemoration

Written by Dr Edwina Wright

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During those years she honed her skills in writing reports and policy documents, running workshops, undertaking projects and developing a rich knowledge of the HIV sector and the structure and machinations of local, State and Commonwealth Governments.

All of which she brought to ASHM in 1999 along with the respect and trust of the sector. And in the 18 years that she worked at ASHM what she achieved was essentially Herculean and impossible to describe in the short time I have today.

Broadly, as CEO of ASHM, she contributed to national, regional and international communities by producing a huge opus of work for each of the areas of HIV, Hepatitis C, Hepatitis B and STIs.

Under her guidance as CEO, ASHM developed national HIV treatment, PEP and PrEP guidelines; it developed s100 courses for general practitioners in Australia; it produced HIV educational monographs that continue to be widely used and revised to this day. ASHM established a highly successful and respected International Division that worked with several regional countries, providing them with an International S100 prescriber course and 7 HIV laboratory courses. Levinia and her staff fostered these countries' autonomy by helping them to develop their own HIV and STI societies.

She drafted and coordinated several of the HIV National Strategies over the past 2 decades.

She saw ASHM host the 2007 IAS conference in Sydney and play a large role in the World AIDS Conference in Melbourne 2014 which saw her putting together a 3 day Leadership and Mentoring course for HIV professionals in Asia and The Pacific region. Mentoring and stigma were always chief themes in Levinia's work.

Fed up with having to bring in outside companies to run the annual ASHM conferences she developed a highly successful in- house Conference Division. And here you can see her at the opening plenary of last year's (2016) ASHM conference in Adelaide with Steve Wesselingh (left).

ASHM went on to bring viral hepatitis and STIs into its portfolio and the approach that she had undertaken so successfully with HIV she applied to ASHM's work with viral hepatitis and STIs: driving national strategies, driving education, workforce development and treatment access. She brought leaders and stakeholders in from these new areas to help guide the 8 Board and the Society thus ensuring that the standard of ASHM's work across all these areas was always very high.

Levinia undertook important and ambitious work and fought hard, long battles, especially when ASHM brought viral hepatitis into its portfolio. But because she was a champion of human rights, she stayed in those fights – not because her opponents were worthy – but because the fights were worthy and worth winning.

Here is where one may rightly call Levinia “commanding” (to wrestle back a word that is typically used only to describe men). She didn't tolerate fools, foolish ideas or wasting time with senseless turf wars. Levinia's forward thinking and energy around access to healthcare, marshalled through the work of her remarkable ASHM staff, were integral to Australia's current international reputation for leading the world in hepatitis C treatment access, hepatitis B diagnosis and treatment and HIV diagnosis, treatment and prevention.

Levinia was also prescient: back in 2000 she suggested that perhaps the drugs we were using for post-exposure prophylaxis- PEP- should be used for pre-exposure prophylaxis- PrEP- but she was strongly criticised for such an unorthodox and “dangerous” idea at the time, alas.

She was a consummate professional and treated all people equally.



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She was very generous with her time and was always there at the end of the phone to provide advice, drawing on her immense corporate knowledge of the sector.

I am very mindful that along with her mother and close friends that Levinia's loyal staff at ASHM are feeling her loss acutely. They saw how hard she worked at ASHM, often arriving at work at 4 or 5 am in the morning. They were the recipients of her mentoring, care and interest in their lives and future career aspirations. They worked very hard to bring about her visionary progress. Their respect for Levinia matches her respect for them and the work they did together for nearly two decades. The ASHM staff also saw how thoughtful and patient Levinia was in caring for her father, David who lived with Levinia for several years prior to his death a few years ago.

Levinia's personal life was rich with friends, travel especially on trains, cooking and pursuit of fine wine and food. But she kept it largely private, which again reflects the high level of her professionalism.

In October last year Levinia and I went to Nashville for Anna Roberts' and David Wilson's wedding which was wonderful. Here is a photo of Levinia and Anna and myself at the wedding (above).



However we both struggled with downtown Nashville, where we were staying and one day we cabbied it south of Nashville to seek refuge in the Cheekwood Botanical Gardens and Museum. Here, in this photo you can see the ever practical and technical Levinia, with a map of the gardens, trying to work out which path we should take.

And this was one of the paths we took together that day. Which was just beautiful, as you can see (left).

Commemoration

Written by Dr Edwina Wright

Presented at the
Australasian HIV&AIDS Conference
on 6 November 2017

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[Listen to the audio recording](#)



Levinia has accompanied so many of us down our own individual paths.

Many of us owe her a large part of our skills, insights and successes. I know how completely indebted I am to her.

It is no surprise that commemorations are being held all around Australia in Levinia's honour, a fact that would completely astonish her.

Levinia Crooks you were a force of nature!

The world could have done with another three or four hundred years of you!

We are so diminished for having lost you! Yet so rich for having known you!

Vale Levinia! Farewell!

Tribute

From Senator Dean Smith

As Chair of the Parliamentary Liaison Group for HIV/AIDS, Blood Borne Viruses and Sexually Transmitted Infections, Western Australian Senator Dean Smith paid tribute to two inspiring leaders—Levinia Crooks and Neville Fazulla—who were “trailblazers instrumental in the fight against HIV” in a parliamentary address on 13 February 2018.

[Watch the full parliamentary adjournment speech](#)



LEVINIA CROOKS

A CELEBRATION OF AN INSPIRATIONAL LIFE

Please join us for a memorial event celebrating the life of one of Australia's leading HIV advocates, Levinia Crooks

Event Date & Time

Friday 24 November, 6:00pm - 7:00pm

Location

Rex Centre

58A MacLeay St, Potts Point (Entrance near Baroda Street)



Events held for Levinia Crooks

- Perth 31st October 2017 (4:30 – 6pm): Held at The Vic Hotel (226 Hay St, Subiaco WA)
- Canberra 6-8th November 2017: A celebration and appreciation was held at the [Australasian HIV&AIDS Conference](#)
- Sydney 24th November 2017 (6pm): Held at The Rex (50-58 MacLeay Street, Potts Point)
- Melbourne 30th November 2017 (6-8:30pm): Held at The Alfred (AMREP Education Centre Seminar Room) 89 Commercial Rd Melbourne, VIC 3004



Martin Holt 
@martinxholt

Following

Bridget Haire 'disobediently' remembering
Levinia Crooks, who really didn't want us to
make a fuss (but we are, anyway)
[@ASHMMedia](#) [@_afao](#) [@napwha](#)
[@KirbyInstitute](#) [@CSRH_UNSW](#)



6:24 PM - 24 Nov 2017

3 Retweets 7 Likes



Martin Holt 
@martinxholt

Following

.[@GregDore2](#) on Levinia Crooks' leadership in
pushing for an equitable, collaborative
response to hepatitis C in Australia... and
missing her [@KirbyInstitute](#) [@ASHMMedia](#)
[@_afao](#) [@CSRH_UNSW](#) [@HepAus](#)



6:43 PM - 24 Nov 2017

3 Retweets 11 Likes



ASHM
@ASHMMedia

Prof Adeeba Kamarulzaman delivers tribute
on behalf [@iasociety](#) at [#rrrapsummit](#) for
A/Prof Levinia Crooks AM:
ashm.org.au/news/vale-levi ...



11:33 PM - 16 Nov 2017

6 Retweets 9 Likes



You, Int. AIDS Society and APCOM Foundation





HIV cure
@HIVcureAU

Following

The world lost a champion of collaboration, compassion and dedication when Levinia Crooks AM passed away last week.

bit.ly/2ivhjMi



1:15 PM - 24 Oct 2017

6 Retweets 4 Likes



You, NAPWHA, AFAO and 2 others



Christy Newman
@thisnewman

Following

[@edwina_wright](#) delivers a moving tribute to the indefatigable, irreplaceable, Levinia Crooks AO who we worked with as Adjunct A/Prof [@CSRH_UNSW](#), on top of all her incredible contributions to the HIV and viral hepatitis response [#ASHM17](#)

10:47 AM - 6 Nov 2017 from Canberra, Australian Capital Territory

3 Retweets 8 Likes



3



8



SWOP NSW
@SWOPnsw

Following

SWOP is sad to note the passing of Adjunct Associate Professor Levinia Crooks, AM, after a long illness. She will be missed.

[#LeviniaCrooks](#)



4:23 PM - 17 Oct 2017

6 Retweets 8 Likes



6



8



Edwina Wright
@edwina_wright

Following

Prof Sharon Lewin speaking at a celebration of Levinia Crooks' life at AMREP tonight
[@ProfSharonLewin](#) [@ASHMMedia](#)



9:09 PM - 30 Nov 2017

1 Retweet 2 Likes



1



2





Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine

Published by Saysana Sirimanotham [?] · October 16, 2017 ·

It is with great sadness that the Board and staff of the Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine (ASHM) announces the passing of Adjunct Associate Professor Levinia Crooks, AM today on 16 October 2017 after a long and courageously fought illness.

Levinia's contribution to the work of ASHM has been untiring, far-reaching, extraordinary and exemplary. She was Chief Executive Officer from November 1999 to September 2017 and has been a leading advocate in the Australasian and international BBV and STI field.

<http://www.ashm.org.au/news/vale-levinia-crooks/>

Vale Adjunct Associate Professor Levinia Crooks, AM

28 November 1960 – 16 October 2017



4,902 people reached

Boost Post



Like



Comment



Share



Steve Oakes, Mary Crowle and 49 others

Most Relevant

14 Shares



Duc Nguyen I am shocked and very sad. What a great loss. Thank you and may you rest in peace our beloved Levinia! You will be deeply missed.

Like · Reply · Message · 31w



David Courtney-Rodgers Condolences to Levinia's family and to all at ASHMORE a wonderful lady who will be missed greatly. Thinking of you all at this sad time.

Like · Reply · Message · 31w



Ann Mehaffey Sad and tough news. Thank you Levinia your passion & drive was inspirational.

Like · Reply · Message · 30w



Jeff Lazarus My condolences. Levinia was a remarkable woman and I am so grateful to have known her.

Like · Reply · Message · 31w



Philip Cox Vale and thank you for all your work in changing the life's of so many

Like · Reply · Message · 31w



Jodie-Lee Little RIP Lavinia what an extraordinary woman and advocate you have been for all people past and present with HIV in Australia... thank you for that phone call back in 1987 in the Gong to start the Positive Women's Project with ACON you were a trailblazer and you made a difference.. there are not enough words, a very sad time indeed

Like · Reply · Message · 31w



Doris Hopkins Very sad to hear this news. It was a pleasure to have met Levinia and for her to share her insights and work with myself and my work colleagues. She really has made a significant difference to the world.

Like · Reply · Message · 31w



Andrew Grulich My condolences to you all. Levinia will be missed by a great many people.

Like · Reply · Message · 31w



Gary Stocks So sad to hear. Great support to many through dire times.

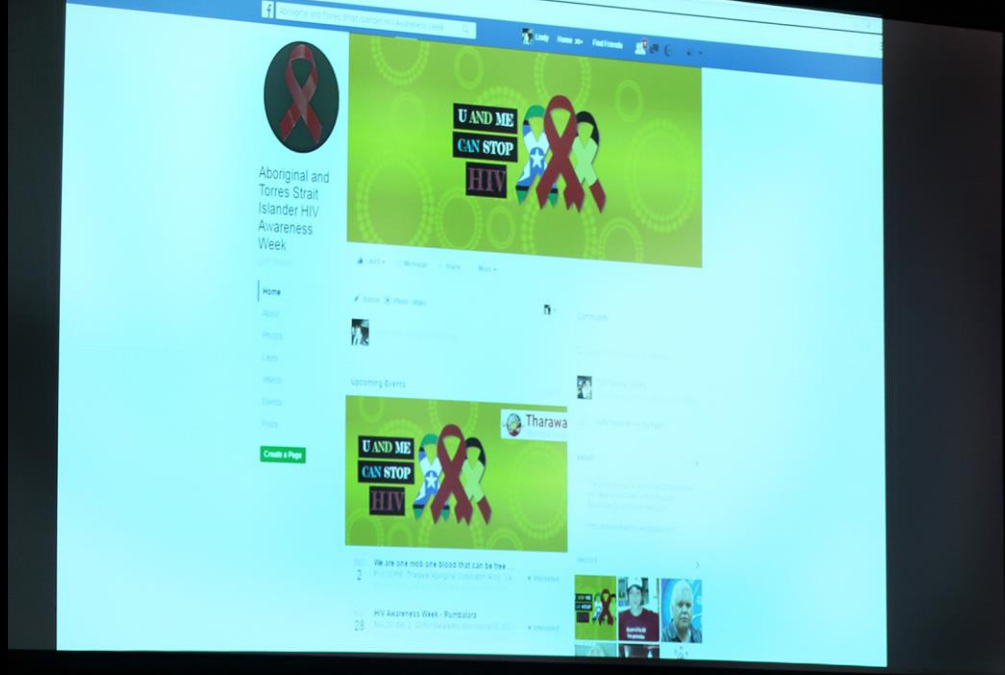
Like · Reply · Message · 31w



Sami Stewart Vale Levinia.

Like · Reply · Message · 31w





ashm

