



# Quentin Buckle 1953-2003

- ❖ Founding Member of The Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture (VFST)
- ❖ VFST Committee of Management Member 1988 - 2001
- ❖ Awarded VFST Life Membership December 2001



**Quentin Buckle**, a fiercely committed human rights and social justice activist for 30 years, died on February 26 in Sydney after a short neurological illness.

In Melbourne in the 1980s, Quentin was very active in solidarity with people struggling against repression in Iran and Chile. His experience with Chileans led directly to his work in founding the Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture.

Quentin was prominent in the youth and homelessness services sector in Victoria, serving as the first Executive Officer of the National Youth Coalition for Housing and later helping to reshape the Victorian Government's approach to homelessness.

In his later years in Sydney, Quentin, who was of Anglo-Indian descent, worked with activists in the emerging GLBT communities in Asia and the Pacific. He did voluntary planning work with the Humsafar Trust, the AIDS organisation in Mumbai, helping it expand its services over five public hospitals in Mumbai and other areas.

He was a member of the Asia-Pacific Rainbow Network and played a major role at its first assembly. His work in this area was crowned by his championing of the outreach and diversity programs for the Sydney Gay Games 2002, including the very successful scholarship program, and in the Amnesty-sponsored human rights conference during that time.

## From Paris Aristotle - Director, VFST...

"It is difficult to fully describe Quentin's contribution to the creation and development of the Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture. What began as a seed of hope amongst



a group of committed community groups, professionals and human rights activists, has grown into a flourishing and innovative service for thousands of people who have survived the horrors of torture and persecution. Quentin's passion to shape the service into one that had the courage to sit with the pain and anguish that survivors feel and to help them rebuild their shattered lives is borne out in their actual stories of rebuilding. His vision of an agency that would constructively carry that learning into the political realm, where social and systemic change could be achieved, has also been one of his most enduring legacies.

Quentin's generosity and effort was never motivated by personal reward. He was committed to advocating for and protecting the human rights of all people, particularly the most vulnerable. Quentin wanted a better world for everyone and was willing to spend the hours, days, months and years providing much of the intellectual rigour, creativity and passion needed to achieve this. He argued for and supported us to be politically astute, sophisticated in our analysis and as strategic as possible, so that we could push the boundaries as a service and as advocates.

He advocated that we build a service, holistic in its approach, grounded in the community and committed to valuing the cultural diversity of the people with whom we work. There is no doubt that the Foundation is an infinitely better place as a consequence.

In some important and fundamental ways, much of what the VFST has achieved and what it has become, is because of Quentin. Our good fortune is not that Quentin crossed our path but that we managed to lay the path together. Thanks QB, we are forever in your debt."