

Sue Pinckham interviewed by Daniel Browning, Sydney, February 2023

Daniel Browning: [00:00:02] Okay, here we are. So you've watered. You feel like you've had enough water?

Sue Pinckham: [00:00:08] Yeah. I just needed a sip.

Daniel Browning: [00:00:09] Before I can get you some more.

Sue Pinckham: [00:00:12] No, no, look. Those two glasses will not get drunk in this whole time. Just need a sip every now and again.

Daniel Browning: [00:00:18] I need the water to go to bed. Like to stop headaches?

Sue Pinckham: [00:00:22] Yeah. Yeah. At the end of the day, to rehydrate a bit. So I've been up since 230 this morning, and I've had like five cups of tea and two bottles of water. And if I have much more, I'll be constantly in the toilet and I've got a huge day. So it's just little sips from here on in.

Daniel Browning: [00:00:43] And on that note, we should get started. And I've begun, I should say this is another instalment in the Muru-ba series of Indigenous oral histories for Sydney World Pride, in collaboration with the Queer Archive and Nick Henderson and Stephen Ross. I'm Daniel Browning and I'm the interviewer on these occasions. So can I get you to introduce yourself as fully as you would like, how you would like to be identified and known?

Sue Pinckham: [00:01:11] Yep. We're. My name's Sue Pinckham. I'm a Birripi woman from mid-north coast of New South Wales, Cape York. I think beautiful place in Australia and thank God rest of Australia hasn't really found it yet and it's still pretty much untouched, but it is starting to be a few more people going there and a few more buildings going up, which I'm not that happy about but can't help progress and the expansion of the population, I think probably. I don't know what to say about myself, but I will just say that I'm a mother, a grandmother, and a great grandmother and 67 years old. I like to be an activist in our community. I've done that, I think maybe since I was

about six years old. I really didn't know that's what I was doing back then. I was fortunate that I grew up being the only girl in a street with 67 boys. And so I learnt really young to stand up for myself, to make my voice be heard. And I pretty much ruled the boys because they were terrified of me, because I had to do everything better than them, so that I actually got to participate and to do stuff.

Sue Pinckham: [00:02:42] And I think that was probably one of the best things that happened that I learnt how to actually stand on my feet and to stand up not just for myself but for everybody. Because in that street there was a lot of boys who weren't as rough and tough as the rest of them, and I stood up for them and I think that was a good grounding to actually learn that you need to be an ally to people and you need to be able to speak up regardless of how big you are, how small you are, whether you're the same gender, whether you're just the one who needs to be there. But I think as a six year old, I didn't know that I was advocating, but it was really the opening of my mind to standing up for people, including myself. So yeah, I've been doing it for a long time and I think I've had some pretty amazing opportunities through doing that and constantly like to see change happen. And I learned a long time ago to do that. You've actually got to get involved in stuff. So yeah, I do all the time.

Daniel Browning: [00:03:56] That must be the longest introduction I've I've ever had.

Sue Pinckham: [00:03:59] Sorry. No, no, it's just it's. You can chop it and edit.

Daniel Browning: [00:04:02] No, no, it's, it's actually, it's actually, it's actually good because in that you, you talked about what motivates you and what you gave us a story about, about what drives you and compels you as a human being. So that's the it's the longest but it's the most informative introduction I've heard. Some people just go, I'm the president of blah, blah, blah. And but on that note, like what? What are the what are some of the would you describe yourself as a health advocate, someone who works primarily in health? What are the kind of occupational kind of references that you might put against your name? It's a long and varied career. Yeah.

Sue Pinckham: [00:04:39] Yeah. Probably one of the things that. I'm really proud of is advocating for. Aboriginal women and children and young people around issues of violence. And I was part of a group of Aboriginal women who lobbied for a very long

time to set up an Aboriginal women's legal Service. And part of the founding group of Warringah, BIA, Aboriginal Women's Legal Centre, the only independent Aboriginal. Youth child. Independent Legal Centre in Australia still to this day, a long time coming, but well, well worth the effort. It's still running. All these years later, I'm really proud that I was part of that happening, and its journey has been a tricky one through different government. Being in government, yeah, being in power, but also the different levels of government, local, state and federal and the lobbying continued nationally for that to grow, to be national, not for worrying about it, but for each state and territory to have those services in their, their actual states and territories.

Daniel Browning: [00:06:08] So it was kind of a model for other states and territories.

Sue Pinckham: [00:06:11] Absolutely. Absolutely. And each state and territory now has but not independent. They're all attached to a community legal centre and the other places where Ingabire is the only independent one. But from that came the anti-violence projects for everything, including the Gay and lesbian anti-violence project that was here in New South Wales and the across funding bodies. They looked at different streams that were needed, particularly within the Aboriginal community, but within the rainbow community, to open it up for us mob to be included, not to stay. Solely within the Aboriginal realm. But, you know, we're we're diverse, we have different lives. That's the word. That's the word. And I think that, you know, the world outside sees us as one. And don't give us a complete life.

Daniel Browning: [00:07:21] Now. I mean, I want to just say about the anti-violence projects. We they're not as visible as they used to be. We were really clear in the nineties when I was living in Sydney when I first moved here. The anti-violence project was a huge part of what we had to do as a community to protect each other and violence on the street was much more commonplace. Do you think there's still a need for I mean, I don't particularly feel safe as a queer black man in Sydney, on the streets, even in Oxford Street. We don't talk about anti-violence enough.

Sue Pinckham: [00:07:58] A grade, A grade. I have just finished Bing. And that didn't come out right. The National Closed the Gap campaign has target 13, which is around violence. And I was part of a group of women in New South Wales and the acronym is a one but it's the Aboriginal Women's Network and lobbied within that core group to get

funding for five workers. And those workers are working towards establishing not just services but a model overall to deal with violence within and towards the Aboriginal community in New South Wales. And part of the original thinking for that was for that to be used as a national model as well. And that fund, we were successful in getting the funding for those five positions and the Rainbow Community were a huge component in that as were our disabled community, because they're very often left out as well. And our youth and our children and incarcerated, regardless of age, gender, were also built into that so that it was again looking at all of us and it didn't matter where we sat, what we were doing, it was to look at everything and to look at not just the victims, survivors of the violence, but also the perpetrators and treatment programs for those as well. So that we're looking holistically, holistically at dealing with the issue of violence within and towards us. And that was another amazing thing. And that's like that happened this year, and that's really exciting that it's rolling out now. But then I step back from that because I think. I don't think I'm too old, but I think there's younger people who have got the stamina and have also got the insight into the government policy stuff where I haven't been as active in that any now. And so I just step back so they can take off with it. But I'm still watching it. If I don't think they're doing it, I will put my nose in there again.

Daniel Browning: [00:10:26] Where is it? If someone said. In in the story of your life. Where does it begin? I mean, you'd have to tell me when and where, but if someone asked you where, where does your story begin? Which is what I'm doing right now, where does your story begin?

Sue Pinckham: [00:10:42] Okay. Well, I was born in Balmain Hospital in 1956. Um. I lived pretty much. Close to Cape York as a baby, but basically in Sydney, in Balmain, Birchgrove then moved to the inner west. Then Queensland travelled around Australia from 14. Ran away from home, didn't like what was happening to me, so took myself out of a yucky situation, travelled around in a double decker bus. That was the best education I ever got. It really was. It was amazing and I learnt lots of things.

Daniel Browning: [00:11:34] You weren't driving it, I hope, at that age.

Sue Pinckham: [00:11:35] Well, no, that's. I learnt to drive on a dirt road in that time and take a bath. Yep. Yep. And that was pretty scary, I have to say. But good fun too. And you know, made some amazing friends, some really good networks and

connections that I'm still friends with today. And, and it set me up again I think with. A big network of communities that I feel like I've got a belonging in and that I can just go and be comfortable, but I can support as well. And I can get support too. And I think that's important that we have that support going both ways.

Daniel Browning: [00:12:18] Big family and big, big, big. It's a stupid question, but when we say big family, of course we've got big families. But your immediate brothers and sisters. No.

Sue Pinckham: [00:12:27] No, not a big family. Me, me. I had a brother, but he passed before I was born. And just May. That was it. And I think probably that was part and parcel of the reason I left home when I was 14, because it was pretty tricky and. Mike. My extended family is really big, But the immediate family, no. But, you know, again. I know. Not again, because I haven't actually said this. I think in every yucky situation there's a silver lining. And that's one of the things that's helped me get through my life is finding those silver linings and actually building it into making not just my world a better place, but the world outside my life, a better place. And it's given me insight into situations that. Have been a bit hairy for a lot of people. But I've been able to see that because I wasn't necessarily right involved, but I could stand up and do something about it, which was great.

Daniel Browning: [00:13:40] That episode in the Street, I think it was majority of boys. Mm hmm. So just just give us give us a bit more sketch that a little more clearly for us.

Sue Pinckham: [00:13:51] Yeah.

Daniel Browning: [00:13:52] So were you Birchgrove then? Yep.

Sue Pinckham: [00:13:54] Birchgrove Birchgrove. And back then, Birchgrove Balmain Birchgrove was seen to be a slum area of Sydney.

Daniel Browning: [00:14:02] Working class.

Sue Pinckham: [00:14:03] Oh, absolutely. Absolute. No, nothing like it is now. But back then, you never had to shut the windows and doors. It was safe as. Honor amongst thieves, I think was where that actually came from.

Daniel Browning: [00:14:20] You got nothing. You can't rob.

Sue Pinckham: [00:14:21] Us. Yeah. Yeah. And everybody looked after each other. But at the end of our street was a really big hill, Grassy hill that went down to Birchgrove oval. And we used to ride bits of cardboard or bits of metal or something down that hill. Birchgrove Oval was down there, but there was a road in the middle that the buses used to terminate at. And quite often there'd be lots of blood and broken bones there because the bus would come there just as you'd slide down the grass and bang into the bus and busted bits of body everywhere.

Daniel Browning: [00:14:58] The stationary buses.

Sue Pinckham: [00:15:00] The stationary buses. And, you know, we sort of learnt to look after each other and learnt how to not reset bones, but learnt.

Daniel Browning: [00:15:11] How emergency first aid.

Sue Pinckham: [00:15:13] That's the one, that's the one. So we wouldn't really get hiding when we'd get home or we'd go via the hospital first. You know, kids, you have to be resilient. And back then it was, it was tough. You had to be tough to grow up in Balmain, but you also had to look after yourself and each other and all the kids stuck together. Yeah, we did some pretty out there stuff that if you tried it these days, you, you wouldn't be your parents wouldn't be impressed for sure. But you also I don't think we'd be game enough to try some of the stuff that we did.

Daniel Browning: [00:15:56] Yeah. And there was that was the moment where you, the activist in you came out.

Sue Pinckham: [00:16:02] Absolutely. Absolutely. And I like I said earlier, I think being the only girl with all those boys, I really learnt to speak up and to stand up for myself

first. But I saw how many of the boys weren't the alpha male type figure and they were getting.

Daniel Browning: [00:16:21] Picked on, abused, bullied.

Sue Pinckham: [00:16:23] Yeah, they were.

Daniel Browning: [00:16:24] Getting it's kind of homophobic in nature even at that.

Sue Pinckham: [00:16:27] Age. Absolutely. They were getting trounced by well, they were the alpha males. But in later days, some of those boys, some of the big queer campaigners out there, the bullies. Yeah. And I think maybe they were trying to deal with their sexuality at the time. They were a bit older. And, you know, maybe they're just trying to figure that out but didn't know what they were doing at the time. And you know, they were just trying to be tough and rough and. Yeah.

Daniel Browning: [00:16:58] Yeah. The bullies often are.

Sue Pinckham: [00:16:59] Yeah.

Daniel Browning: [00:17:00] The ones who are hiding because they're punishing in that other person. Something in themselves.

Sue Pinckham: [00:17:04] Yeah. Yeah. That internal homophobic behavior. But projecting it. Yeah. But that really did frustrate me. And I reacted straight back at that because I didn't like watching those other boys crumble. And I think maybe I tried to mirror that alpha boy image straight back at them. And I know it scared the bejesus out of them because I was a girl. And girls don't behave like that, you know? Hmm. But, you know, maybe that also helped me model the male being the lesbian that I am, too. I don't know. I don't. I'm not a rough, tough lesbian. I don't get into fights or any of that sort of stuff. But, you know, I think it just made me be really aware how not to behave. Hmm.

Daniel Browning: [00:18:01] And I guess you've got to project that Alpha to sometimes to an Alpha to see how ridiculous it looks or how. Oh, you know, it tends to make victims

of people rather than be constructive. I'm all for assertive and strong individuals, but it has nothing to do with their their reproductive sexual organs.

Sue Pinckham: [00:18:25] No, that's right. That's right. But it was really scary behaving that way, too. And at the time, I was I was young, but probably did it on and off for maybe three or four years. And it got less as I got older. But. I think I started to get an understanding by the time I got to maybe eight that this is an. Not just it's not me, but it's not the right way to actually go about getting them to change their behavior. And I started challenging them then about why do you do this? What are you? Why do you behave like this? What's wrong inside your head? And things started to change then, not just for them, but for me. And I think that's when I really advocated. In a different way where before I was being confrontational with them. But I was saying that I needed to do it differently to make change happen.

Daniel Browning: [00:19:28] Mm hmm. And you talked about in the anti-violence project or the kind of modern day iteration of them. It's not just working with victims and survivors of violence. It's working with perpetrators, trying to understand what compels violence and what where, why are they unwell? What is wrong with them? Why do they enact? How do they why do they do relationships this way?

Sue Pinckham: [00:19:55] Yeah. And I think for. A lot of people, they just It's trauma.

Daniel Browning: [00:20:02] Sometimes it's trauma.

Sue Pinckham: [00:20:03] Yeah, sometimes it's trauma. Sometimes it's mimicking how they've grown up and they see that that's the norm. Sometimes I think that it's just. Internal frustration and they just blow a gasket at that time. But it's still not right regardless. And they need help too. Hmm.

Daniel Browning: [00:20:29] That's. Yeah. And I'm never into giving violence anyone a free ticket. But I do sometimes think there's work to be done with those people to understand why they behave in those ways.

Sue Pinckham: [00:20:41] Yep. Yep. And I think for a lot of people, they don't get that in the rainbow community that that violence exists between the Rainbow community as

well. It's not just outside comes and attacks the rainbow community. It exists within our community as well. And that can be a really frightening position when you're there and you're the one being attacked and there's not a lot of assistance out there for us to actually go help or or where do you go to get that help? You know, and that's something that. Needs to be built and there are a few places there, but. Within the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and within the Rainbow community and the combination of those to. It's about finding somewhere that's safe, somewhere that you're not going to feel like you're going to be exposed within either of those communities. And the confidentiality broken, you know, and that's a huge thing in our lives, regardless of which community you're from, because all of it's us anyway. But, you know, I think it's really hard when there's a lack of services, there's a lack of people who understand if they're not. From your community. Or you don't want to go to somebody who is Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander because you're more comfortable talking to somebody else. They need to have a cultural understanding of you regardless and whether that's your your ethnicity or. Your gender sword, you know that that's got to be there. But the confidentiality is one of the bigger parts in there, and there's just not a lot out there. So that's something else that I'm trying to do on this side as well.

Daniel Browning: [00:22:48] It's very hard to kind of like be kind of to work out precisely where to go with the story of your life because, well, I guess after the double decker bus and after all those after learning to drive out there on those dirt tracks and travelling around Australia and running away from home, you know, fleeing a situation you didn't want to didn't want to be in. Where did you, in terms of your own kind of self realization, becoming, identifying yourself to the world? Was there was there was there a kind of coming out or reckoning with that part of your life?

Sue Pinckham: [00:23:25] Yeah, I was 15 and I came out as a lesbian, got into a relationship. I was in that relationship for six years. And I thought that was all wonderful. I was really happy in Sydney. Yep. Yep. Thought that I was all really happy and life was good, was working, and that fell apart. I came home. I was. I traveled a little bit in my job and I came home from Tasmania and found my partner in bed with men and I lost it a bit. And then in my head I thought, that must be what lesbians do. At some point you get to a certain point and you have to sleep with a man. And is that to test whether you're really a lesbian? Is that and I really went through a real conundrum in my head about was I really a lesbian because I didn't want to sleep with a man. I thought I was a

lesbian because I was in this relationship and I thought that it was a safe relationship. And it was I thought six years was pretty long term. And I just I was in a real you know, I didn't know what to do. And so I sort of didn't do anything for a while. And then I thought, well, yeah, I must have to sleep with a man. And I did. And I felt pregnant and I have a son. And it's like, Yep, love my son. He's an amazing man. And I have. Two granddaughters from him and three great grandchildren from him, not him from one of those granddaughters. And yeah, but, you know, that wasn't a reality being with that fella that because I really am a lesbian. And it was like, No, that's not what you do. That was stupid. But yeah, and it's like, God, why did I do that?

Daniel Browning: [00:25:20] It was incredibly consequential, though.

Sue Pinckham: [00:25:21] Oh, absolutely. Absolutely. One of the things in my family is they are very fertile. It's like, Yep.

Daniel Browning: [00:25:28] Lots of kids everywhere else. Yep, yep. When you found out you were pregnant. You know, as a as an out lesbian.

Sue Pinckham: [00:25:36] I was seven months pregnant before I found out I was pregnant. Hmm.

Daniel Browning: [00:25:40] You didn't notice?

Sue Pinckham: [00:25:41] It didn't. Nothing. Nothing? Yeah, just. I was skinny as a matchstick back then, and there was no physical change to my body. And at seven months pregnant, I just went boom and popped out and went, Oh, my God. I went to the doctor and said, I think I'm pregnant. And the doctor said, I don't think it. I can tell you right now that I think you're probably about eight months pregnant, But I was seven months pregnant. Wow. Yeah, it was an absolute spin out. Hmm.

Daniel Browning: [00:26:15] And then I guess it was probably enough. Well enough to have on your mind to know that you were seven months pregnant. But you're pregnant at all.

Sue Pinckham: [00:26:24] Mm hmm.

Daniel Browning: [00:26:27] Did that kind of forced you to confront, you know, I mean, what were you thinking? What was. What was in your head? How am I going to do this?

Sue Pinckham: [00:26:34] Or I knew that I'd cope with it because I'd coped with some. Pretty horrendous stuff in my life up until that point. And I had a good support network around me, friends and family. Not my close, immediate, immediate family, but the rest of my family. And I knew I'd be all right. And I was more than happy to have a baby. I thought, Yep, this is going to be wonderful. I'll have my own family. And like I said, my son is now 43. So it's like, Yep, I did it had him. And at the same time as having him. Was still helping other people deal with their stuff, which helped me at the time. I think it really did, because while I had to concentrate on what I was doing and for me and for my baby, I was still not giving up all the other stuff that I was doing anyway. Mm hmm. Yeah. Because I'd been helping a few other mates who were dealing with their sexuality. Who were. Getting traded pretty badly by their family. And so they left the areas where they came from and moved to Sydney. And I just got a bigger house and we all lived in the bigger house. So it was like a new family coming together and it worked really well.

Daniel Browning: [00:28:02] I mean, people, people forget that. How traumatic and how often declaring your sexuality, declaring who you were to your immediate family led to you being effectively thrown out of that family know, thrown out on your arse onto the street. We have to remind ourselves this is what happened.

Sue Pinckham: [00:28:23] Absolutely.

Daniel Browning: [00:28:23] It's still happened today. But perhaps there's a more social acceptance. Social acceptance. I'm led to believe that's the case. I don't know. But yeah, it was really tough. Like you had to find your own fact. You had to find a family because you had not yet you had nothing.

Sue Pinckham: [00:28:38] Yep. Yep. My uncle punched me off the front verandah at his house when I was 15. When I came out and, you know, get out, you're not part of the family, blah, blah, blah. And I haven't spoken to him ever since then and it's like I

never wanted to speak to him again. And he's the only one of my mother's siblings that's still alive.

Daniel Browning: [00:29:02] Just the way, isn't it?

Sue Pinckham: [00:29:03] Yeah, yeah, yeah. But, you know. You don't just because that's your blood family doesn't mean that that's your family. Not to my way of thinking, you know, my family, of my chosen family I love deeply. And we look after each other.

Daniel Browning: [00:29:21] And they would never do.

Sue Pinckham: [00:29:22] That. No, that's right. That's right. That's right. They'd be the cushions and the trampoline at the other side or in between stopping that happening.

Daniel Browning: [00:29:33] I mean, I talk to talk to a lot of mom about this question of what happened when they, you know, came out or. You know, identified themselves. And by and large, it's been very positive, like most people have said, family. They made it made no difference. They just supported me. We just had to kind of keep it quiet or whatever, you know, like or I was wrapped in love and or my gender was supported. My Yeah.

Sue Pinckham: [00:30:01] Which is wonderful. Yeah, it really is.

Daniel Browning: [00:30:03] I mean, but.

Sue Pinckham: [00:30:04] But not everybody has that experience. And I think it's the people who. The melding sorry, the melding of both the ones who have had the really good experience of coming out identifying and the ones who have had the traumatic time. The melding of that together is really nice to see and to be part of, but to enable moving forward for all of us. And I just think for the younger ones coming through now. No, not just the younger ones, because there's a lot of lot of older people who are actually identifying. I just thought about that. Oh, hang on a minute. What are you saying? No, there's actually a lot of older people who haven't had the opportunity. For whatever reason, but they are now and I think to be able to. Be truthful with yourself and

to be honest with yourself, first and foremost, but then to share that. And to know of the both sides of that coin.

Daniel Browning: [00:31:12] Possibilities.

Sue Pinckham: [00:31:13] Yeah. Yeah. And I think that's where it's good to have yarns like this shared. But to know that you're not the only one that's gone through that either side of that. But there's always a way through and there's always going to be somebody you can have a yarn to about. It is useful, helpful, all that sort of stuff. But you doing that for yourself is going to help somebody else one day too, you know? And I think for me, being sitting here now, having this yarn with you is. A relief to be able to actually share with somebody else you sitting across now from me. But whoever else is going to listen to this in the future, I hope it's going to help something in their life. Or they're going to go, Wow, I didn't know that happened back then. You know, and I think that there's a lot that's happened in the Rainbow community that a lot of mob aren't aware of. You know, they think it's first time this has happened because I've done it. I'm the one who set that in motion. And I think, you know, you need to do your research because there's been a lot of trailblazers out there.

Sue Pinckham: [00:32:30] You know, the 78 ERs, a trailblazers with the protests, you know, how many Aboriginal people were part of the 78 ers? And, you know, I know because right now as Sydney world pride is happening, there's photo, a photo that's being used for Sydney world pride and there's a dark woman in one of those images and. That woman has passed, but she's going to be honored at the Human Rights Conference because Derrick Country and she was a trailblazer in more than one aspect. She set up the first psychological. Anti-violence family service in Australia for anybody, not just Aboriginal people but for anybody. And it's called Yanyuwa and it still exists and it still works and it's still saving lots of people, children, families across the board. And she was a puppeteer. You know, I'm sure people have watched telly and ITV and Yellow Mundy puppets. That's her. She's going to be honoured at the Human Rights Conference. She was a trailblazer. You know, she was a 78.

Daniel Browning: [00:33:58] Can we name her?

Sue Pinckham: [00:34:00] Chris Burke was her name. She was a trailblazer. She was an inspiration. And yet I know that people think that they've they've set the wheels in motion because they're the ones who have you know, I started this because I'm the first one who's been out there and done it. I know in lots of services there's a lot of people who think that, oh, you know, if it wasn't for me, there wouldn't be the opportunity for the Rainbow Aboriginal community to be part of this because I got involved. So, you know, now we've got a float happening in Mardi Gras. Well, guess what? There was floats before you went to work at Icon and there will be more floats that will be identified. Look at the the timeline, the Aboriginal timeline that's up there that Tim Bishop put together. You know, there's people have been working for a long time, all trailblazers in their own right. You know, I remember making floats in our house, making a float at the old TV down under the Harbour Bridge, cooking curried sausages and vegetables and rice at home and taking, you know, four boilers full of the stuff down to Palikir TV for the mob who were there making the float. We had the best time, you know.

Daniel Browning: [00:35:19] Tv. What was that?

Sue Pinckham: [00:35:20] It was Aboriginal TV that didn't go for very long.

Daniel Browning: [00:35:26] That was free to commercial community.

Sue Pinckham: [00:35:29] Broadcaster, community broadcast privately owned. It didn't go for very long. It was, you know, one family trying to bust in to the television world. Media.

Daniel Browning: [00:35:43] That must be it must be lingo. It must be language.

Sue Pinckham: [00:35:46] Yep. Yep. And they had a studio down underneath the Harbour Bridge, and, you know, we were down there, but.

Daniel Browning: [00:35:56] That was that was down there.

Sue Pinckham: [00:35:58] Six weeks. We were down there making the float.

Daniel Browning: [00:36:01] And what were you do you remember what year that was?

Sue Pinckham: [00:36:04] No, no. Some timeline. It's on the timeline.

Daniel Browning: [00:36:07] Look at the timeline.

Sue Pinckham: [00:36:08] That's the one. That's the one. And, you know, we. All just got in. There was no money for it. We all just chucked in whatever dollars we had. Like I said, people just cooked up food. Took it down there. It was the best float. We all had an absolute ball. And I don't know whether we had more fun actually building the float or the actual parade. It poured, poured, poured.

Daniel Browning: [00:36:36] One of those views.

Sue Pinckham: [00:36:37] That Mardi Gras night. And like, we died, we made hair for the the float. And that was on the top of the cabin, on the truck. And we dyed it for Torres Strait colors. And because it rained so much, that came off and went all over the cabin and we had to raise money because the cabin of the truck had to be resprayed. But, you know, we all did it. We all, you know, that was trailblazing. And there's you know, I know that there's still people around today, 2023 who think it was because of them that there's a float. And I'm sorry, but there's a history there.

Daniel Browning: [00:37:14] Long history.

Sue Pinckham: [00:37:15] Yeah.

Daniel Browning: [00:37:15] So do you remember your first parade.

Sue Pinckham: [00:37:20] Being in it or watching.

Daniel Browning: [00:37:22] It? Well, perhaps watching it if. If that came.

Sue Pinckham: [00:37:25] First, Um. Watching. It was. I didn't know what was actually happening. I couldn't get close enough to say because I was I'm five foot six, but. I was

a bit shorter then. Probably five foot three then. I couldn't get close enough and I just knew that there was I could see the tops of floats going past and I was determined next year I'm going to be in that. And so the next year I was in that and it was. The political TV float. And it was. Mhm. That was the second float that was in Mardi Gras.

Daniel Browning: [00:38:15] Had your son already been born by this stage. No. No. What about when you first. I mean, I, I watched have watched many parades, but actually being in the parade completely transformed my idea of what it was and and what compelled me to be there on the night. And it's hard to describe, you know, how it feels, but that even if it's just a moment of joy and acceptance, I think everyone on the planet has a right to feel that and particularly us mob because. You know, we intersectional. We're not only traditional. We only come from this place. But we have a right also to feel that we belong on that street. On Oxford Street. What can you describe the emotions you felt when you first parade? Oh, being in it.

Sue Pinckham: [00:39:11] Goose pimples. Tears, but tears of happiness. But tinged with. Sadness because there were Aboriginal people protesting that there were Aboriginal people in the parade.

Daniel Browning: [00:39:29] Really?

Sue Pinckham: [00:39:30] Mm hmm.

Daniel Browning: [00:39:31] Sue, I don't remember this at all. Like blackfellas saying that we shouldn't have a presence.

Sue Pinckham: [00:39:36] Yes.

Daniel Browning: [00:39:37] We're talking. We're talking ultraconservative blackfellas or.

Sue Pinckham: [00:39:41] Talking religious.

Daniel Browning: [00:39:43] Fellows.

Sue Pinckham: [00:39:44] Who was saying that we shouldn't be there, that we were shaming our mobs by being part of it. And it was. That was the sad part that they were doing that and shaming themselves. Not they were shaming us. They were shaming themselves and. Didn't stop the absolute. Pleasure and joy of being included and dancing up Oxford Street. Dressed up in. And it. It's not costume, it's not fancy dress. I don't know how to describe it, but dressed in something that is just freedom. And and freedom of expression, freedom of choice, freedom to let loose. But yeah, feeling sadness at them, shaming themselves like they did. But it made all of us stand stronger together. And. Had the best night. It was wonderful. But that was a sad moment. But the goose pimples, the. Spectators on the side cheering so loudly when they saw the Aboriginal flag. Was just amazing. And like, we didn't have big flags, we just had little flags that we were all carrying and it was just amazing. I'm getting goose pimples now talking about it. And year after year after year. Dancing up the street. Walking up the street. Being on a float up the street. Being on the back of a rainbow coloured ute up the street. Just grows and grows and grows. Being a spectator in a fancy VIP area, watching everything go past. Being a spectator. Caring for people with disabilities. People with disabilities watching them watch the parade. All of it has been amazing. Being a judge. Has been amazing having the opportunity to actually go, Yep, well, that one's a winner.

Daniel Browning: [00:42:11] We forget that they are. There's a judging process.

Sue Pinckham: [00:42:15] Absolutely. There's a vetting program to get a float into Mardi Gras, you know, And I think this year is going to be amazing because it's back out on Oxford Street and, you know, COVID changed how it happened and being at the cricket ground changed the rules because the cricket ground had its own rules for what could happen there. The COVID had rules for numbers of participants and blah blah. You know, there's a whole heap of change happened and now we're back to freedom again.

Daniel Browning: [00:42:46] And this is 2023. I mean, I'm looking forward to seeing how without without those restrictions which were necessary for our safety. Yes. How how it will go back to if it will go back to its old self.

Sue Pinckham: [00:42:59] Yes. Yes. Agreed. And I think the fact that. World pride is on and Mardi Gras, there's going to be more people here. I mean, I went to a fair day yesterday and I believe that there was more people at fair day than I've seen before. And I think that's partly because, well, Pride's on and there's more visitors here, international and domestically. And I think it's going to be amazing. I can't wait for the parade to happen, but I also can't wait for world pride to have the opening concert and to have the march across the bridge. I'm really I can't wait for that one. I think that's going to be spectacular. Can't wait for the opening part of that. I can't talk about that yet. Okay.

Daniel Browning: [00:43:52] And in recounting your personal history, which is is very hard in a life like yours, I guess perhaps after the parades and around the time of your participation in that first parade. We were stalked, literally. Oxford Street was under I mean, we were stalked by another virus, you know, which was a pandemic HIV aids. And it's hard, hard to forget what it was like. You know, I certainly it was something that kind of really controlled my coming out and was always a shadow that I had to live with and continue to, but much less focus on it. So I'm always thinking about the generation we lost and all the people who aren't here to speak for themselves, who perhaps played a role in the things that we're talking about. Maybe just your memories of of that virus and and how it it controlled and changed the lives of many.

Sue Pinckham: [00:44:58] Yep. Yep. Ha. Wow. Yeah, it certainly did, I think. Sorry. I just need to clear my throat now.

Daniel Browning: [00:45:09] Big time. You can't edit out. Yeah, of course. Good.

Sue Pinckham: [00:45:14] Good. Yeah, I think. That was one of the scariest. Moments. I think the may. Was when HIV hit our community. The Aboriginal community, Aboriginal community watching. And listening to my friends, their fears, their concerns for themselves and each other. But listening to them. Talk to me and to each other. About the ones that didn't care. And we're just going out and behaving recklessly. And. How could we do something to help them educate themselves, to stay safe, to stay alive? That was really frightening. It opened my eyes to. Learning how to look after yourself, not just around HIV, but across the board and. I think. That hasn't changed today, it's probably escalated. And I know that HIV still plays an active role in my life. With. My

partner works in an HIV residential care unit. I still. We made a flag as a float for Mardi Gras out of lamé, 18 foot long. 14 foot tall. In memory of. One of our brothers who was. Part of our floats, part of our journey, and he wanted an Aboriginal flag to go sideways up Oxford Street.

Daniel Browning: [00:47:29] Remembering this? Yeah.

Sue Pinckham: [00:47:31] Mm hmm. And he passed because of. He got the virus and we made that flag in memory of him.

Daniel Browning: [00:47:41] We're talking about Malcolm Cole.

Sue Pinckham: [00:47:42] Mm hmm. Yep. Certainly.

Daniel Browning: [00:47:45] And he wanted that gold lamé flag.

Sue Pinckham: [00:47:49] He wanted the lamé flag to go sideways up Oxford Street. And we made that.

Daniel Browning: [00:47:56] So our colors of the black.

Sue Pinckham: [00:47:59] Red and the Aboriginal flag made out of lamé. And it was sewn up in my dining room. And it's been. It's had a life of its own.

Daniel Browning: [00:48:11] Where is it now?

Sue Pinckham: [00:48:13] Arts being hung tonight at Carriageworks. That's part of Sydney World pride.

Daniel Browning: [00:48:20] Fabulous.

Sue Pinckham: [00:48:21] It's had quite a life from that first Mardi Gras parade.

Daniel Browning: [00:48:26] So do you remember? You sound so on it. You were sewing it?

Sue Pinckham: [00:48:29] Yep, yep, yep. Myself. Another. Corey, a woman who has passed. She was HIV counselor. Um. And there was a little group of us. But there was more to the the flag, but there needed to be a frame made and there was lightning.

Daniel Browning: [00:48:55] Marking the.

Sue Pinckham: [00:48:55] Middle of it. And it was stunning. It was amazing. It's on that Mardi Gras timeline. It's hung in graduation ceremonies at educational facilities. It's hung in New South Wales Parliament House. It's hung in land, hand backs in Queensland.

Daniel Browning: [00:49:18] It's been in the travels around a lot.

Sue Pinckham: [00:49:20] It's been in another Mardi Gras and tonight it's being hung for Sydney world pride. So yes, it's had a life of its own and its legacy is there. It's had lots of was part of Cory Gras a couple of years ago. Lots of people have had their photos taken in front of it and it still shimmers and sparkles and shines gorgeous. It's amazing.

Daniel Browning: [00:49:46] After all those years, 28 years. Oh, gee whiz.

Sue Pinckham: [00:49:50] 28 years. It's still.

Daniel Browning: [00:49:52] Beautiful. Black. Don't crack.

Sue Pinckham: [00:49:53] That's the one. That's the one.

Daniel Browning: [00:49:56] Just. Yep. I didn't know Malcolm Cole, but his name is often is clearly one that we all should know. And what was he like?

Sue Pinckham: [00:50:06] Amazing. Gentle, inspirational. One of those people that quietly walks along makes change happen. Was one of the first people to go and do things. But nobody recognized that for a long time. Um. Yeah, I. I really, really wonderful human being who is missed by lots of people. And I'm glad that recognition has gone to

him for the things that he has done. You know, he did the Captain Cook float and that costume was just superb and he looked delicious in it and.

Daniel Browning: [00:50:56] Didn't.

Sue Pinckham: [00:50:57] Know what else to say.

Daniel Browning: [00:50:58] And as a political maneuver, the strategy of dressing as Captain Cook and bringing our our disaffection, our our you know, I want to say our opposition to the very image of the colonial of colonial power and then taking it into the parade was powerful because it spoke also to the queers in our community. Hoo hoo hoo. Well, the racism within our community.

Sue Pinckham: [00:51:26] Absolutely.

Daniel Browning: [00:51:28] So it was a very powerful move.

Sue Pinckham: [00:51:30] Yep. Yep.

Daniel Browning: [00:51:31] And know great political theater.

Sue Pinckham: [00:51:34] Yes. Yes. And that was his way of getting the message. Not just locally that hit the international press, you know, and. That costume had another outing in another Mardi Gras parade. The message continues, and that's part of the voice that will continue. You know, and that's from somebody who. As such a gentle person. Is still lighting. It's still inspiring. You know, it's just amazing.

Daniel Browning: [00:52:09] You were right there at that moment. So those moments in history, that's precisely why you have to be where you're a big part of this project.

Sue Pinckham: [00:52:19] But I also don't like talking about myself. I like being in the background.

Daniel Browning: [00:52:23] No, no.

Sue Pinckham: [00:52:24] Other people, no.

Daniel Browning: [00:52:24] Mob do. But I just come back to to the simple fact that if you don't tell some aspect of the story, the possibility is that will be taken away or it will be misrepresented or a lie will be told about it, which is true. Then once it becomes it's like a virus, you know, really. You can't bring you can't find the truth if there's so much misinformation. And some people take credit for things they didn't do.

Sue Pinckham: [00:52:49] That's true.

Daniel Browning: [00:52:50] Too.

Sue Pinckham: [00:52:50] That's true.

Daniel Browning: [00:52:51] Too. And also, whitefellas may be maybe tempted to tell our story if we if there's no record of our story. So we're creating a record here of what our story is.

Sue Pinckham: [00:53:02] Yeah.

Daniel Browning: [00:53:02] So the were girls, Corey Wormholes. Wormholes. Now, is that was that a tell me where that word comes from.

Sue Pinckham: [00:53:11] Corey Wormholes was a group of. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander. Women identifying women. From all over Australia who came together to support each other, basically. In pretty dominant male dominated. Rainbow community. Way back. Um. Logos is daughters, sisters from everywhere.

Daniel Browning: [00:53:48] And a language term.

Sue Pinckham: [00:53:50] Yes. Yes. And it's about. Mob identifying as women, actually supporting each other. And we've been really fortunate we had another float with. A design made and you can't see me. I'm actually drawing the design here, which is an upside down triangle with ovaries and a vagina that an artist called Re Design.

Daniel Browning: [00:54:25] Oh, wow.

Sue Pinckham: [00:54:26] And raise an amazing artist, but also a university lecturer. And. Brilliant human being loved deeply. And. We had t shirts made.

Daniel Browning: [00:54:41] And what was the what was the the triangle vagina made out of?

Sue Pinckham: [00:54:47] It was just a placard. Yeah. No, it was just a big it was a big tablecloth and we just sewed it on and the material just made it designed that.

Daniel Browning: [00:55:00] Type of thing. Yeah.

Sue Pinckham: [00:55:01] Yeah. Redesigned it and we just sewed it all together. And I was like, Yep, there it is. It looks lovely. It's packed away in the shed and t shirts and sloppy joes and a few singlets because some people don't wear t shirts. That's me.

Daniel Browning: [00:55:21] Was there, was there any, was there an ethos behind crew work goals.

Sue Pinckham: [00:55:24] That was just so we could be there to support each other so that there was a visibility for us women to actually have a space in the male dominated world at Rainbow World at the time. And we still hung around together after that. There was we didn't want to do another parade. We just stayed mates and connected up together. And then a few years ago we decided that we needed to do something again. So we did. And we were part of choreography and did. Oh. Dance routine. But the the banner came out again and it was part of the exhibition at Cory Gras. And right at the moment, we're going to perform three times at Sydney World Pride. And that's.

Daniel Browning: [00:56:22] Scary. So now it's almost kind of transmogrified into a dance troupe. There's a there's a whole dance kind of side to the work. Yep.

Sue Pinckham: [00:56:31] We've been fortunate enough that. People would have seen the background for Sydney world pride by now, I'm sure. I'm not breaching anything

there. But we have been fortunate enough that one of the members of Koori workers is the actual designer of that background, and that's from Manjula Creative.

Daniel Browning: [00:56:56] And.

Sue Pinckham: [00:56:56] Jessica Johnson.

Daniel Browning: [00:56:57] Oh, beautiful. And we have. Is that you in that dress? You show me a photo on your phone of her. I am showing you a gorgeous dress.

Sue Pinckham: [00:57:05] That's the tunic that the dancers are going to be wearing.

Daniel Browning: [00:57:09] How do you get that in so many colours? Yep. Full rainbow.

Sue Pinckham: [00:57:12] That's the background. And yep, it is all rainbow, but it's Sydney world pride background and we're the only ones that are having anything made out of that. So we're all very happy about that. Yeah, so we're performing. Three times once the opening of the gathering space next Thursday. The opening of the Human Rights Conference and the opening of Ultraviolet, the Women's dance. So it's.

Daniel Browning: [00:57:42] The three performances.

Sue Pinckham: [00:57:44] Three times.

Daniel Browning: [00:57:47] And you you leading the dance routine.

Sue Pinckham: [00:57:49] Or. No, no, no. But I'm in it. I'm in it, but not leading it.

Daniel Browning: [00:57:52] You had to learn the moves.

Sue Pinckham: [00:57:53] Genoa. Genoa dances, which is a local dance troupe here in Sydney, leading it. And we had rehearsals yesterday. It's like, Oh, here we go, getting there. It's all going to happen very, very soon.

Daniel Browning: [00:58:09] Now, in this very long life, busy life, working across many spaces. What? I think you're compelled by this idea of safety and people always being safe in their environment. But in that very long life, I guess, where do we need to go to next? In your story, if it's not just parades and and and near missed pregnancies, just the one. But what else do we need to know about you?

Sue Pinckham: [00:58:42] Okay. Probably. Maybe one of the last things is that. I am on the board for Sydney World Pride. And one of the last things, maybe it's not really going to be the last thing that I do, but one of the last things that I probably want to talk about is the legacy that's going to be left for our mob after Sydney World Pride has finished is the growth for our rainbow community across Australia with more visibility locally for our mobs wherever you come from with building, hopefully. Stronger communities within our own communities. And I know from. A great yarn I had yesterday with the mob from Broome. They're having a watch party for the opening of Sydney World Pride, and I'm so happy for that community over there because they're planning on next year having their own pride happen in Broome. And I think that is just, that's inspirational to me, that they could get enough. Strength, courage, motivation from coming together now and working with Sydney. World pride with each other in their community and supporting each other, that they're going to do it again and do it consistently. Their for their community, their rainbow community there and build something more that's going to keep growing. You know, there's Fabolous happens, there's stuff goes on everywhere and I think we just have to keep growing. Yeah, yeah, yeah. You know.

Daniel Browning: [01:00:39] Pride is the pride is not something that is owned by.

Sue Pinckham: [01:00:42] Sydney. No, absolutely not. But world pride is in Australia now because of the First Nations component of the bid. And you know, I'm so thankful.

Daniel Browning: [01:00:54] Because that convince the people who award the idea of world.

Sue Pinckham: [01:00:58] Pride prices.

Daniel Browning: [01:01:00] They had to be convinced that there was a strong First Nations component and that it was that it was accepted.

Sue Pinckham: [01:01:05] Absolutely, Absolutely. And it's the first time world Pride's been in the Southern hemisphere, and it's because of First Nations mob that it's here.

Daniel Browning: [01:01:14] Because of our representations that the bid was.

Sue Pinckham: [01:01:18] At the bridge and like, you know, kudos to their No, no.

Daniel Browning: [01:01:23] But you just know for a fact that without.

Sue Pinckham: [01:01:25] Our record it's on record. Yep. Miscellaneous and unanimous scurry.

Daniel Browning: [01:01:32] They flying the flag.

Sue Pinckham: [01:01:34] Performing, performing, doing a wonderful job. And Richard. I'm sorry, babe. I don't know your performing name, but you were there, too, Richard.

Daniel Browning: [01:01:45] Some fella.

Sue Pinckham: [01:01:46] Anyway. Yep. You can't say that. But we're both doing that.

Daniel Browning: [01:01:50] Part of the bid.

Sue Pinckham: [01:01:50] Yeah, Yeah, part of the bid. And Richard was actually living in London and not in Greece and went to. That when the bid was happening and performed with Miscellaneous and Nana mouskouri as part of the bid, and because of those three being there is part of the reason that, well, pride is happening here.

Daniel Browning: [01:02:11] Something people wouldn't necessarily know. I mean.

Sue Pinckham: [01:02:14] Yeah, that's right. That's right. And it's just brilliant. And now we're having. The gathering space happen at Carriageworks, which goes for six days and nights. First Nations hours and International First Nations. But we've got our own little bit of first nation space for us to happen, just a little bit separate as well. There's

some amazing stuff happening. And for kudos to Ben Gratz. Fantastic has worked really hard. The whole team.

Daniel Browning: [01:02:51] Ebony, Ebony Williams and Felix.

Sue Pinckham: [01:02:56] There's new team member. Catena has just come on board and Erica, they're done an amazing job. The Aboriginal Advisory Committee to Sydney World Pride and the other board member. Stephen, you know, it's been a big, big job. But for me the legacy is when it's all gone and it's all finished. We're just going to keep growing and getting stronger in our own communities because we've had the opportunity to come together now to take it home and to have that. Strength and courage and more openness and more people from our mob coming out and feeling safe to do that.

Daniel Browning: [01:03:39] There's one thing I have to ask you to do before you go. Thank you so much for being for being part of the project. But I'm asking everyone to just reflect on this idea of pride. So I want you to introduce yourself again. But just this last section is for all those people who don't have pride or people who want to. You need to tell someone how you why you felt, why you feel pride where it comes from. A lot of mobs say family. Some say, you know, everything I've done has taught me to be proud. Is proud the same as pride. You know, a lot of people have reflected on that. But pride isn't something that you are born with. You have to nurture it within yourself. I have a little think, but yeah, this is the. Broadcast section. I've asked everyone and some people have been really been able to nail the concept or really give me an insight into how you acquire pride, because for us, pride is a complex notion and you can't. You can't just be proud because you're queer and because you're black. My mom always said to me, You're not special. Remember? You're not special. And don't go into the world thinking that you're special. Hmm. That was my realization. Pride. You need to back it up.

Sue Pinckham: [01:05:06] You do. You do. I agree with you, Mom.

Daniel Browning: [01:05:11] So if you wouldn't mind introducing yourself and just. You can just. You can just, like, muse out loud. It doesn't really have to be anything clear, so.

Sue Pinckham: [01:05:18] Hmm.

Daniel Browning: [01:05:19] Over to you. Structure to the absolute. Pinkham I'm from you can say, you know, if you want to talk about the role of Sydney, well, pride, it's fine too. But health advocate, you know, trailblazer. Or you just go. My name is Sue Pinkham. Because I can introduce you.

Sue Pinckham: [01:05:54] I don't know if this is what I'm. It's just coming into my head.

Daniel Browning: [01:05:58] I can ask you questions. It doesn't have to be a monologue.

Sue Pinckham: [01:06:03] How this sounds first. My name is Sue Pinkham. I'm really proud. And have pride because I have worked hard, have been honest and trust that the things that I do and believe in have value.

Daniel Browning: [01:06:32] And did you have you always had a sense of pride? I guess it's something that you've had to nurture. I wasn't born with a sense of pride.

Sue Pinckham: [01:06:39] No.

Daniel Browning: [01:06:41] But you have to experience what it is like to have none to to know what Pride actually is.

Sue Pinckham: [01:06:45] Yeah, I think I had to work really hard to get to actually know what Pride was to start with. And then I had to work even harder to think that I deserved it and then continue working. To believe that I had it and to understand what that did to my life. And I think right now I have pride because I've worked through lots of ups and downs and speed humps have gotten in the way. But I have pride in myself for being able to get to the age that I'm at. Being somebody who. Is safe for people to. Come to when they need somebody to nurture, when they want to. Put down their baggage for a little while. But come back and deal with that baggage. I feel my pride is to open doors. And I think that's probably where. I feel better. And allowing my pride to sit with me is that I can't stop. Opening doors and making change.

Daniel Browning: [01:08:15] And also, I think in looking over your very long career, what I'm saying is this this this drive towards making places safe and making people feel safe. So this is I'm talking about rainbow Mob. I'm talking about, you know, black fellas who identify as LGBTQ plus, you know, creating cultural safety, if you can, around that identity, those identities has really kind of been what you've been about.

Sue Pinckham: [01:08:43] Yep. Yep. And I think as well. Trying to teach other people not to be as judgmental and to open their minds. So that they're making it safer for us to actually access services. So I think a lot of what I've done. Has been.

Daniel Browning: [01:09:10] Around oriented delivery, giving pride to others.

Sue Pinckham: [01:09:14] Yeah. Yeah. And I didn't think about it like that. Yeah. Yeah.

Daniel Browning: [01:09:19] Organizational concept, now, isn't it? I mean, this thing will. Pride is big, but pride itself is something, I think separate.

Sue Pinckham: [01:09:25] Yeah, absolutely.

Daniel Browning: [01:09:26] Absolutely.

Sue Pinckham: [01:09:27] I mean, world pride is Just a minute. Little splash in the ocean. The other stuff is lifetime. And I.

Daniel Browning: [01:09:38] Know inside.

Sue Pinckham: [01:09:40] Us. Yeah, Yeah. I mean, I know we had a quick yarn earlier and made connections between our lives that. Have made changes happen. You know, just from. Relationships across the years and being able to have yarns with people and they take the ripple effect is what I'm getting at here. The ripple effect. You know, you you say something to someone and they take that back to their workplace and they they're in agreeance with what you've said, but they take that into their workplace. And so that ripple effect happens somewhere else, even though you're not there, you know, and.

Daniel Browning: [01:10:21] That's like black grapevine. But just like, you know, all the things that we're saying, the things we're talking about, the communication we're having today has has will have an effect.

Sue Pinckham: [01:10:31] Yeah, yeah, yeah. You know, a bit like. That Captain Cook outfit calls.

Daniel Browning: [01:10:38] Captain Cook.

Sue Pinckham: [01:10:38] Yeah. The parade, the lame flag going sideways up Oxford Street. You know, that stuff has ongoing.

Daniel Browning: [01:10:47] We don't think so at the time, though. And you can say this because you were right there at that moment. Yeah, but now, looking back on our history, long involvement with Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras is these things that US mob. Who you call the rainbow. You know, Rainbow community, the Rainbow Mob. We have made big changes and we don't kind of stand back and go, Hey, look. Gee, I did that.

Sue Pinckham: [01:11:10] Yeah.

Daniel Browning: [01:11:10] We need to reflect more on why we're proud and what we've done.

Sue Pinckham: [01:11:14] Yep. Yep. And one of the things that I just came to mind is actually. I don't know if I should say this. Maybe this might get edited out. But challenging Mardi Gras to have a smoking and a welcome to country at the beginning of Mardi Gras has been something I have done for.

Daniel Browning: [01:11:36] That these things need to.

Sue Pinckham: [01:11:37] Be swore then. But something I've done for probably 25, 27 years.

Daniel Browning: [01:11:42] The reality is this is a fight within our community to get recognition, to be in the to be in Mardi Gras and to for it to be conducted a long term like me, you know, kind of traditional ways to respect our traditional.

Sue Pinckham: [01:11:56] Ways. You know, we had a.

Daniel Browning: [01:11:58] I think it is deserves to be said.

Sue Pinckham: [01:12:00] So we had a protest a couple of years ago, maybe three, four years ago with Nana mouskouri was going to do.

Daniel Browning: [01:12:09] The vigil.

Sue Pinckham: [01:12:11] Was going to do the welcome to country at the start of. The parade. Went with Avenue and Oxford Street and. Mardi Gras had agreed that, yes, that could happen. And all standing there, all waiting. We're all first nations or, you know, we're all stand there waiting for it to happen. And then they just came along and said, no, we'll do it up at Teller Square where the cameras are. And so it can be all thing. And Graham and I just looked at each other and I said, this is shit. They're not going to do it. And we went not we have to trust, we have to do this. And so off we went. And guess what? No, they weren't going to do it. So we refused to move from Teller Square. And we were the first float. And it was a real tussle because everybody's like, you've got to move. You got to move. It's all backed up. We're timing. Timing. Timing is right in the middle of everything. And we're like, yeah, we know there's supposed to be a welcome to country happen here. Oh no, we haven't got time for da da da da da. So it didn't happen. It happened the next.

Daniel Browning: [01:13:26] Year because you realize that no win situation. Yes.

Sue Pinckham: [01:13:30] But the message got across that there was supposed to be and that it had been agreed, but it didn't happen. It happened the next year. There was a smoking and a welcome, but it was in the park.

Daniel Browning: [01:13:44] It wasn't in the parade on the parade route.

Sue Pinckham: [01:13:47] No, it was in the marshaling grounds. Not there. Oh, look. This better, get better, get edited. I think it was all just fucking racism, honestly. And just the language had to come out then because it's like, My God, how long do you have to keep this attitude going and how long do we have to keep fighting this stupid? Colonial attitude. You know, it's like.

Daniel Browning: [01:14:17] I will edit it out, but I just really hope that sometimes we have to confront what the realities are and the situation. It's dishonest to not say that maybe we don't we don't have racism within within our community that needs to be fought. Because you've been you've been trying to carve this space and make sure this space is safe for years. And. No, no. Nothing happens without people agitating for it. So can we finish on Maybe. Yeah. I mean, you're trying to make places safe. What are the things that you are most proud of in this life, of yours, of advocacy and being a mother and a grandmother and a great grandmother?

Sue Pinckham: [01:15:02] All of it.

Daniel Browning: [01:15:04] Proud of getting people making making environments safe culturally and physically.

Sue Pinckham: [01:15:09] Yeah, I am. I'm proud of making places safe. I'm proud of making people believe in themselves to be strong, to become. The years ago, I supported these young lads coming out and I've watched them grow and I've watched them. Become. And I don't know how to say this. I'm just going to say it. I'm. Become the supports for other people coming out. Go home to their communities and be challenged in their communities about.

Daniel Browning: [01:15:52] About their sexuality.

Sue Pinckham: [01:15:53] Yeah, about their sexuality. But then watch them. Perform in their communities.

Daniel Browning: [01:16:01] And stand in their pride.

Sue Pinckham: [01:16:03] Or stand in their pride. But being paid to get out there and do their drag shows in the local community and they then are the ones that other younger people are going to saying. You've given me the safe ground for me to come out now. You've helped me. That makes me really proud. You know, And I'm still in contact with those. Well, they're not young anymore. And I actually giggle when we all see each other. And they call me Mom, you know, and I giggle, and I go, like, Yep. And I'm watching the hair go white on them now. I'm going. Yeah, well. Mm hmm. It's lovely. I'm very proud of that. It's intergenerational safety. I'm proud of that.

Daniel Browning: [01:17:01] Sue, thank you so much for being my guest and for reflecting there on Pride and for I'm proud of you. Thanks for thanks for being part of this project.

Sue Pinckham: [01:17:10] Thank you. Thank you for your time. That was lovely. Uh, edit out everything that you did because it's only going to go for what?