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INDEPENDENT’S DAY



Introduced by Magda Szubanski

“I think everything I have done in my life before now has prepared me for this role.”
Dr Kerryn Phelps

When Kerryn Phelps gave a ground-breaking television interview to Australian Story in 1998 about her same-sex relationship, she was a celebrity TV doctor with no public political aspirations. Her decision to speak out came at a cost both publicly and privately.

“There were some people who were absolutely supportive and terrific,” recalls Dr Phelps. *“But there were others who were excoriating... and very hurtful.”*

Twenty years later, Kerryn Phelps has moved on from blazing a trail for same-sex relationships to pull off the upset political victory of the year, winning former Prime



Minister Malcolm Turnbull's blue-ribbon Sydney seat of Wentworth as an independent. And key to her success has been the support of her wife Jackie.

"A lot of people have come up to me when (Kerryn's) giving a talk and said, gee, I wish I had a wife," says Jackie Stricker-Phelps. *"That's sort of how it plays."*

But making history is nothing new for Kerryn Phelps. She was the first female leader of the Australian Medical Association and was at the forefront of the marriage equality debate.

Australian Story joins Kerryn Phelps and her family and friends behind the scenes to learn about the extraordinary personal events leading to her new career in Canberra: the estrangement and reconciliation with her daughter; and the story of how they became the first same-sex non-kin couple to adopt in NSW.

Now, as Dr Phelps takes her place on the growing Canberra crossbenches, we ask, can she win Wentworth a second time when next year's federal election comes around?

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