



Ten Forty Newsletter

November 2015

www.olderdykes.org

Summer Solstice Party

For Ten Forty women and friends
7pm Saturday 19 December 2015

At Margot's
St Peters



Bring a plate of festive food to share, your own drinks, and a Lucky Dip gift – (perhaps something you'd like to receive yourself?) – with a price guide of around \$15.

Please let Margot know you are coming by emailing contact@olderdykes.org

Dykes for Dinner

6.30pm Thursday 10 December

Hotel Saravan Bhavan

15 The Strand Croydon

Please email contact@olderdykes.org
by Sunday 6 Dec

6.30pm Thursday 14 January 2016

Bay Tinh Marrickville

316-318 Victoria Road Marrickville

BYO wine only

Please email contact@olderdykes.org
by Sunday 10 Jan



I'm trying to fit 30 minutes of daily exercise into my busy schedule. Today I took 120 fifteen-second walks.

A woman on the phone to her friend...

I feel like my body has gotten totally out of shape, so I got my doctor's permission to join a fitness club and start exercising. I decided to take an aerobics class for seniors.

I bent, twisted, gyrated, jumped up and down, and perspired for an hour. But, by the time I got my leotards on, the class was over!

Wellbeing – our theme for 2016

The overall theme For Ten Forty in 2016 is wellbeing; meaning physical health, mental health, community and ageing, including issues faced by childless women.

The first Dinner and Discussion for 2016 will be held on 13 February. The topic is: How to make sure you can dance all night: physical fitness with Judi.

If other women have ideas for topics around this theme, or want to be involved, email contact and your ideas/interest will be forwarded to the Planning Group.

Diann, for the Planning Group

Report

October Dinner and Discussion



Maree O'Halloran was our guest speaker in October. Maree is a passionate trade unionist and lawyer, who has previously worked as a teacher in public schools. She also worked at TAFE and Corrective Services. Maree has been an Industrial Officer and President of the NSW Teachers Federation, and CEO of the Welfare Rights Centre, an NGO specialising in social security law.

Maree described the highs and lows of her trade union experiences as a woman and a lesbian. Women trade unionists, she said, felt pressure to adopt male behaviours which she believes is still an issue for women. Making a difference for GLBT workers is also difficult.

Maree explained that she became involved with the trade union via her class politics. Early in her work as a teacher she saw massive inequalities and wanted to do something about it. Then while she was working at a supermarket checkout during a holiday break she was confronted by the inequalities faced by women in the workplace.

She herself was just on a break from teaching but the other checkout operators were mostly single mothers. The management accused them of not balancing the till and docked their pay. Managers would target a different woman each week. When they targeted Maree, she walked out of the job, saying she was not going to put up with that

behaviour from management. But she did so in the knowledge that she had another job to go to – teaching. The single mothers could not do that. They were trapped.

Maree believes that this supermarket experience motivated her to become an active unionist. Her first union role was as a women's contact person. The women's movement was influencing the Teachers Federation at the time and women's action groups were forming. Maree said in those early days she never spoke at the meetings; the first meeting she spoke at was a women's conference.

Other experiences deepened her understanding and reinforced her commitment. She described two instances in particular.

The first was when she and her school were slammed as left wing subversives by the local member for holding a lesson about the Australian flag. It was at a time when there was public debate about whether to change the flag.

The other experience was the drama created by the media when a young man, who was school captain and was to give a speech at the school, wanted to use the occasion to come out as gay. He wanted to use the opportunity to talk about how difficult it was being a young gay man at school.

The Daily Telegraph initiated a huge campaign about it. Maree was President of the Teachers Federation at the time. Carmel Tebutt, a Labour minister, would not

answer her phone or talk with the union. Maree urged the union to take up the issue. Their response was, "The reason we've liked you, Maree, is because you haven't been a 'professional' lesbian." She told us that this was one of the most challenging experiences of her career.

After Maree's talk we enjoyed a lively question and answer session. Several women shared their own work and union experiences. Many topics were explored, including the casualisation of work; how to rise through the ranks; activism; enterprise bargaining; and what supports young lesbian teachers have in their first year of teaching.

About 20 women attended the talk. We all went away inspired and much more informed.
Diann

AGM report

Ten Forty Matrix Incorporated held its second Annual General Meeting on Saturday 7 November.

Seven women were elected to the Management Committee – Pearlie (Chair), Esther (Treasurer), Dorothy (Secretary and Public Officer), Jan, Cheryl, Sylvia and Margot.

The meeting again paid tribute to Julie Hacker for her generous bequest in 2013, and reviewed the two events we subsidised during the past financial year.

The first was a wholly subsidised afternoon Tea Dance for around 70 older dykes at the Red Rattler Lounge in Marrickville

to celebrate Julie's life and largesse. The second activity was a partly subsidised three-night Fun Weekend at the Berry Sport and Recreation Centre, where members paid \$100 each for the entire weekend.

There was unanimous agreement at the AGM about holding another weekend at the Berry Centre in October 2016.

It was less clear what other subsidised activities appealed, so a survey is being prepared to find out what members want for 2016. Members of Ten Forty Matrix Inc. will receive the survey before Christmas.

What's the difference?

Between Ten Forty and Ten Forty Matrix Incorporated ...

Ten Forty is not an organisation you have to join and has no membership fees. Throughout the year a Planning Group offers a range of social activities and organises Dinner and Discussion evenings where a small entrance fee is charged to cover rent and refreshments. Ten Forty also manages the email list, Contact, and the olderdykes website.

Ten Forty Matrix Inc. was incorporated in 2014 following a bequest of \$43,000 from Julie Hacker, a long time member of Ten Forty. It offers a limited number of subsidised events for members each year.

To become a member of Ten Forty Matrix Inc., contact Dorothy at contact@olderdykes.org for a membership form. Annual membership is \$20 waged, \$10 unwaged.

Viviane's Berry Fun Weekend

Forty-one women enjoyed the relaxing and friendly atmosphere, which honoured our own and Julie's love of lesbian community. It was especially good to welcome and get to know new members, including the Wollongong contingent of Mary, Ella, Elsa and Kris.

Outdoor activities were a highlight. Being older lesbians was no deterrent for our



adventurous members who stretched their muscles in new ways as they sped along the flying fox, and bruised the occasional muscle



in an archery session. Others had a lot of fun at Ella's juggling workshop, and twenty-five of us had a fun time kayaking on the nearby river.

A fair number also enjoyed a 'bushwalk' through some paddocks and up a small hill, where a stunning view of the South Coast opened up before them. And then there was the soothing experience of a dip in the swimming pool or the river.

Other highlights included a cards tournament organised by Pearlie, our cards maestra. Margo brought CDs and DVDs to share and also presented a workshop on science, while Uma provided a lesbian version of Monopoly called Dykeopoly. Jan gave away



boxes of books, which were clearly being enjoyed by various women sitting around reading, while other women sold handmade crafts and paintings.

Many of us simply enjoyed the many opportunities for spontaneous one-to-one chats with friends and new acquaintances.

There was a huge turnout for the concert on Saturday night brilliantly MC'd by Wendy. Acts included impressive 'twirling' acrobatics by Ella and a hilarious Freudian comedy skit by Helen that she creatively dreamed up just a few minutes before the performance. Krystyna, Sand and Marg gave a heart-warming report back on the Michigan Women's Music Festival – poignant because it was the last one to be held. Special thanks to Moira and Marg for sharing their musical skills on the harp and ukulele, and to Mary and others who shared their poetry.

Some of us went further afield on a short drive to Berry where we enjoyed shopping and a coffee and cake fix.

The catering team at the Centre made a generous effort to satisfy our tastes, especially those of us with food sensitivities and allergies. However, no doubt because they mainly cater for children, we found they needed educating about the protein needs of vegetarians and vegans, and this will be followed up when we return next year.

Viviane

Sand's Berry Fun Weekend

When I saw the Berry weekend program included things like kayaking, archery, a giant swing and flying fox, I thought maybe I'd get it together to do the bush walk and leave the rest. But no, I ended up doing

everything except the bush walk and loved it all!

What a treat. Having pleasant activity staff there to guide and look after us was great and added to my confidence to try new and exhilarating things.

Appreciation goes to the deciders and doers who pulled the weekend together, and gratitude goes to Julie Hacker for the generosity and fun of her legacy.

I enjoyed the sense of goodwill and relaxation that the no-pressure program gave, as well as the chance to adventure, play, talk, dance and be entertained.

It was a pleasure to connect with lesbians I haven't met before and with others I haven't seen much of in 20 years.



Living in Wollongong this was almost a local event for me. Great to share good food and sleep-over time with so many from Sydney and others from the Illawarra.

Lesbian space is my favourite kind to occupy. The weekend had a sense of holiday and fun to it that for me celebrates feeling older. If we do this again I'd love to be there.

Sand

About Ten Forty

The first national conference of Ten Forty in the mid-eighties attracted politically active feminists of all hues and sexualities. However, over time it became obvious that a huge majority of women attending follow-up meetings and activities in Sydney were lesbian feminists. Today Ten Forty and Older Dykes refer to the same group of women. We enjoy discussion on the issues we face in work, life and at home, and hold regular fun events to keep us in touch with the lighter side of life. Our website www.olderdykes.org encourages national and international connections between older lesbians.

Ten Forty is not an organisation you have to join, but if you want to receive regular information about our activities and our bi-monthly newsletter, email contact@olderdykes.org and ask to be put on our mailing list.

Please note our new postal address is PO Box 1312 Randwick 2031

Newsletter

To receive a free emailed newsletter, please email contact@olderdykes.org

The web edition and back copies of the newsletter are available for download from our website www.olderdykes.org/about_us/newsletters.html

Who currently does what?

Events planning: Diann, Gillian, Krystyna and Bronwyn

Contact listing in LOTL: Jan

Utilities box: Sylvia and Gillian

Money Management: Esther

Websisters: Jan, Ruth, Dorothy, Diann,

Sandy

Newsletter: editing and layout Ruth and Dorothy