

Newsletter

October 2008
www.olderdykes.org



Ten Forty Dinner and Discussion

6pm - 10 pm

Saturday 1 November

Story telling circles

Topic: What community and support networks increase our sense of wellbeing?

Summer Hill Community Centre.

BYO food to share & your own drinks.

Entry fee for the bi-monthly dinner and discussion is:

\$15 fully waged

\$10 part waged

\$5 concession.

Summer Hill Community Centre is at 131 Smith Street, Summer Hill, near Lackey Street, which leads from the station.

There is parking near the Centre and the station.

By train, the Community Centre is on the right hand side of the station, going towards the City.

By bus, from George Street, City catch the 413 bus to Junction Road, Summer Hill or the 483 to the junction of Liverpool Road and Carlton Crescent, Summer Hill.

What's on

Dykes for Dinner

Thursday 13 November 2008

6.30pm

Almustafa Lebanese Restaurant

23 Glebe Point Road, Glebe

BYO only.

Please RSVP if you are coming

– email contact@olderdykes.org

by Sunday 9 November

Thursday 11 December 2008

6.30pm

Finola's Restaurant (in the Balmain Bowling club)

156 Darling Street Balmain.

Licensed.

Please RSVP if you are coming

– email contact@olderdykes.org

by Sunday 7 December

Date for your Diary

Saturday 20 December 2008

End of year Ten Forty Party

Check the next newsletter for details



About Ten Forty Matrix

Ten Forty Matrix is an informal group of lesbians over forty, many of whom have been socially and politically active in Sydney since 1987.

We enjoy discussion and debate 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.

Five years ago we established the website www.olderdykes.org to encourage national and international connections between older lesbians.

Ten Forty Matrix is not an organisation you have to join, but if you want to receive regular information about our activities and our bi-monthly newsletter, you need to take out a newsletter subscription.

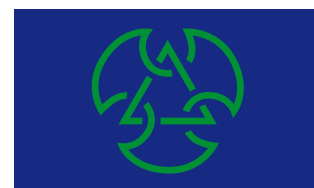
Newsletter subscription

The annual subscription for our bi-monthly newsletter is \$10 waged and \$5 unwaged.

Subscriptions can be paid at Ten Forty Dinner and Discussion evenings or by cheque to Ten Forty Matrix, 29 Florence Street, St Peters 2044.

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

To receive a hard copy please email contact@olderdykes.org.



Notes from the August 2008 Ten Forty meeting

Following the usual lively chatter and delicious dinner provided by us all, we assembled to welcome new women to Ten Forty, share news of past events and flag new ones.

We then were introduced to the revamped olderdykes website, www.olderdykes.org.

Our valiant websisters have done a splendid job. They have not only made the site look better but have made it much more user friendly.

Whilst there is lots of information on the site it does depend on contributions to keep it alive, so if you have a story, article or photo to share, please send it in. There are plans to produce an online calendar where women can contribute their events and activities. Thanks to all those who have put so much time and effort into the site.



Games games games

There were enough packs of cards to run a casino, scrabble sets and other assorted games. Women quickly formed small groups, put up tables and started playing games. There was a general buzz of chatter and laughter about the room

indicating a lot of fun was being had.

The only missing game was Pictogram. Maybe some women will have to get it for their birthday. A great night was had by all.

Sylvia

- August 2 , 2008
- Lesbians who Launch
- A fine vintage of Sydney dykes go international



Launch of the revamped Ten Forty Matrix website www.olderdykes.org



The brains behind the website (not just pretty faces!)



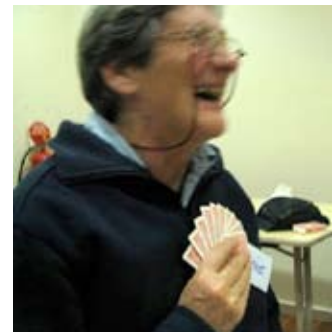
Olympic park cycle ride

In September Sylvia led an intrepid band of cyclists along the highways and byways around Sydney Olympic Park. Highlights were the mangrove boardwalk,

the spiral hill climb and tea at Newington Armoury (our legs needed the rest by then). Many thanks to Sylvia for organising the event.



More fun and games



Last night, my friend and I were sitting in the living room and I said to her, 'I never want to live in a vegetative state, dependent on some machine and fluids from a bottle. If that ever happens, just pull the plug.'

She got up, unplugged the Computer, and threw out my wine. She's such a bitch.....!

Jewelle Gomez - lesbian writer and activist

Below is an extract from Jewelle's keynote speech to the National Gathering of Old Lesbians Organizing for Change (OLOC) held in Los Angeles in August 2008. (The OLAC Gathering was attended by Daphne Lera, who asked Jewelle if we could reproduce her speech in our newsletter.)

"My generation is the first, statistically, to have such a large number of out queer people who are politically active and open. That means numbers that are becoming a critical mass. Knowing what we know; having seen the changes we've seen in the society around us, we are poised to truly embody the words that the acronym OLOC stand for. We can make embracing and agitating for change a vocation, a quest, a passion because many of us have been doing it all of our lives.

"Sitting with my great grandmother watching Neil Armstrong land on the moon in 1969 showed me a quality I knew I wanted to have. She'd been born on an Indian reservation in Iowa in 1883, but she was paying close enough attention to the political world of today to be suspicious. She asked did I really think he was landing on the moon? This was a woman who made learning and change part of her life until the day she passed. That included scepticism and questioning authority. That's who I wanted to be when I grew to be old.

"And as I, and my generation, grow old with our scepticism and our questioning it effects our entire LGBT movement;

and our LGBT elder movement will have to change to accommodate the new OLD.

"Being 60 is not necessarily the same as being 70 or being 80. Not simply the physical or mental differences but the most significant: experiential and political differences. In addition, being a 60 year old lesbian in 1950 is not the same as being 60 in 2008. Being 60 in rural Georgia is different from being 60 in San Francisco or Sydney.

"In 1970 while in undergraduate school in Boston I read the free paper and each week I turned to the classified to see the notice for the Daughters of Bilitis meeting. I was too shy, afraid they didn't look like me, afraid they were too old. I never went, but seeing their notice each week sustained me. But, even though I knew I was them I couldn't envision who those women were.

"And we would have been different from each other. We're all together here in this same room but that doesn't mean we do old in the same way. So our need will be to recognize our commonalities and recognize those differences and grow our movement to encompass them.

"Being old is, of course, both a physical state and a mental state. What I think OLOC has helped me to recognize is that the mental state, the idea of being old, is what we each say it is NOT what the larger society has said it is as it lumps us all together in a flowered schmatte (old garment). Growing old is going through the most comprehensive and challenging changes of a lifetime. And the only people cheering us on will be the ones in this room or rooms like this.

"I was that young woman in New York City in 1976 who was too afraid to go down and join the Pride March in the West Village and before that I was too shy to go to Daughters of Bilitis. I was shy and alone. But that changed. Because of the Lesbian Feminist movement that nurtured me and helped me find the power within myself to grow and to go out even when I was afraid.



"Now, more than 30 years later friends are emailing me pictures of myself and my partner, Diane, that were on the cover of the New York Times because of our involvement in the marriage law suit. I know the steps toward that change were small and sometimes imperceptible between that girl huddled in the window listening to the cheers of the Pride Parade and the woman at the California Supreme Court doing her own cheering. But they were steps toward change within me and in the culture around me. And I keep that girl with me so I don't forget those who are still afraid and so I can see how far I've come."

www.oloc.org
www.jewellegomez.com

(If you would like to read Jewelle's speech in full, please email your request to contact@olderdykes.org)

Am I having a heart attack?

Jan's newsletter description of her partner Ann's recent heart attack, and her comments about women not always experiencing classic heart attack symptoms, have led to quite a few discussions on the topic. So, we thought we'd do some online research, and this is what we found

Yes, crushing chest pain is a classic symptom of a heart attack, but about a third of cases are what doctors call 'atypical' heart attacks - there's no chest pain, and the main symptoms are fatigue, dizziness, nausea, indigestion, or jaw/neck pain.

Atypical heart attacks are especially common in women. And because we don't recognize the symptoms of heart attack we often delay going to hospital. On average, women wait 14 hours after the first symptom of a heart attack to go to Emergency, compared

with nearly three hours for men. And when the symptoms get bad, women take three hours to get to hospital compared with about two hours for men.

Why do we wait so long?

Because 43 per cent of women have no chest pain whatsoever and because the most frequent symptoms we have are:

- shortness of breath - 58 per cent
- weakness - 55 per cent
- unusual fatigue - 43 per cent
- cold sweat - 39 per cent
- dizziness - 39 per cent.

So how do you know if you're having a heart attack, and when should you call an ambulance?

If you have the following symptoms, call an ambulance:

- chest discomfort
- feeling light-headed
- pain or soreness in the arm, neck, jaw, or stomach that lasts several minutes
- feeling sick to your stomach

- feeling short of breath
- feeling sweaty
- feeling suddenly very fatigued.

This especially applies if you've had previous heart problems, you're a smoker, you're overweight, you have a family history of heart disease, you have high blood pressure, raised blood cholesterol, suffer from diabetes, are post menopausal, or very stressed.

You need to act. Don't wait to see if the symptoms go away. When the ambulance arrives, paramedics will assess you before they take you to hospital. And don't worry what ambulance and hospital staff think if your symptoms turn out not to be a heart attack!

Remember heart disease is a far more common killer of women than cancer.

For more information on this riveting topic, try Googling Heart Attack Symptoms In Women or something similar.

Dorothy and Diann

Vale June Cecilie James 1927-2008

June attended Hornsby Girls' High School and then completed a Bachelor of Arts degree and a library qualification at Sydney University at a time when only a small percentage of women completed the leaving certificate, let alone went on to study at university.

June worked as a librarian before marrying and having children.

June always had a passion for books and her interest in feminism grew out of a WEA (Workers' Education Association) course she undertook on women's rights.

She joined one of the first Women's Liberation groups in Sydney and there met her friend and business partner, Julia Sugden.

Together, in 1975, they opened the first Feminist Bookshop in Sydney at Eastwood. The shop was a heartland for women interested in the Women's Movement, women's history, women's art and the new feminist theory. June and Julia attended conferences and women's meetings selling their wares.

Book launches and meetings were held at the shop and academics establishing the

new women's studies courses at universities found it an invaluable resource and source of inspiration. Generations of women have now visited the shop as it is still going strong today in Lilyfield Sydney after 33 years.

June built an extensive library of women's literature. She donated her large collection of books to the Jessie Street Women's Library in the centre of Sydney so that all women could share her lifetime joy of women's writing.

June died peacefully on 25 August at 81 years of age.

Kathie Herbert

(Edited for space. Eds.)

Books

Making Women Count: A History of The Women's Electoral Lobby in Australia

by Marian Sawer

\$39.95

"In 1972 the Women's Electoral Lobby changed the political agenda forever..."

Available now from the Feminist Bookshop, Shop 9 Orange Grove Plaza, Balmain Road, Lilyfield NSW

www.feministbookshop.com

A book review of the phone book

A hefty paperback with too many characters and not enough plot development. Next week, we'll review a more complex work. Your phone bill.



Willing Up And Keeling Over A Lesbian Handbook on Death Rights and Rituals

(Edited from a review at <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~womenweb/Reviews.htm>)

This book is written for and by members of the Lesbian community of Melbourne but the information is relevant to all those who seek to choose what medical treatment they receive, the practicalities of dealing with dead bodies, knowing about wills, family rights biological and non-biological, dying with dignity and recognition of the role of grief. Not for this book is there crap about 'closure'.

That this book addresses death as a matter for the individual, the family and the community, shows us that we need to have culture and ritual to mesh us together. How else

do we thumb our nose at the powerful establishment and give ourselves due recognition. Collectively this book has been put together and collectively is the normal way we deal with death.

This book sets out deliberately to promote Lesbian culture and family. Its tone is made intimate by the recounting of personal experiences by different women such as 'Dying Intestate: A Cautionary Tale'. It reassures by providing the information you need in an easy and attractive to read format which assumes you can interpret the play with metaphor, and tells you where you can get the relevant forms and extra information.

\$20 plus \$5 postage from Long Breast Press, PO Box 168, Brunswick East, Melbourne, Victoria 3057

Retiring Women

Friday 24 October

Our next lunch is on Friday 24 October. We will meet for lunch at Chad Praya, 33 Perouse Rd, The Spot, Randwick at 1pm. Mains are \$13 to \$16.

Following lunch anyone who wishes will be going to see "The Women" at The Ritz Cinema at 3.30. It might be worth having a look at the old black and white version again first. As you know, no male characters appear in the film but the women betray, gossip about and support one another in a familiar fashion.

Let Contact contact@olderdykes.org know if you are interested in one or both aspects of the day.

Aged Care Services for GLTB people

Research

I am a Masters student at UTS, working on a research project exploring the experiences and expectations of GLTB people accessing aged care services.

While the ageing of our population has been a big issue for governments around the country, the needs and expectations of older GLTB people is an area that requires more research. My research involves an online questionnaire: <http://surveys.uts.edu.au/surveys/gltbaged-care/index.cfm>

Any assistance you are able to provide distributing this survey through your networks would be most appreciated.

The survey is anonymous, as I know the questions are sensitive and I want to protect the privacy of respondents.

Happy to provide any more info about the project and also paper copies of the questionnaire.

Cathy 0415 525 344

My People

'My People' is a report of a project undertaken by Dr Catherine Barrett exploring the experiences of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex seniors in aged-care services.

The report is now available and can be downloaded from www.matrixguildvic.org.au