



Ten Forty Matrix Newsletter

January 2018

www.olderdykes.org

Welcome!

The Committee of Ten Forty Matrix is pleased to announce that the merger between our two groups was agreed to at the AGM and we are now one.

In an effort to be inclusive, a decision was made to have two levels of membership: Financial Members and Casual Members.

Financial members will pay an annual fee of \$10 unwaged and \$20 waged, due on 1 April each year. They will receive subsidies for special fee-paying events and have voting rights at the AGM. Casual Members are welcome to attend all fee-paying events, but will not receive subsidies and do not have AGM voting rights.

We are also planning a survey of subscribers to our Contact list to find out how satisfied you are with our bi-monthly dinner and discussions evenings. We'll be asking you for ideas for interesting topics and other ways it could be improved.

Another initiative is to expand our *What's On?* listing in the newsletter to include activities for older lesbians in and around Sydney. If you would like an activity included please send the information to Contact and it will be forwarded to the newsletter team.

What's On?

Dinner and Discussion Group for Older Lesbians

5.45 for 6pm

Saturday 10 February 2018

Topic: Here for Women – What do we want?

Clara Koeck from ACON will provide information on their project "Here For Women". She will also tell us about, "The LOVE Project" which is aimed to serve the over 55s in the LGBTI community. We will have a chance to talk in small groups about what we think we would like to see in these programs, and what you would like to see happen at our Dinner and Discussion events.

We look forward to seeing you all at a great evening event.

Mervyn Fletcher Hall, 81 Dalhousie Street (cnr Dixon St), Haberfield.

BYO food to share and your own drinks.

Gold coin donation

For more information email

contact@olderdykes.org

Dykes for Dinner

6.30pm Thursday 15 February

Thai Power 11
220 Addison Road Marrickville. BYO
RSVP by Sunday 11 Feb to

contact@olderdykes.org



6.30pm Thursday 8 March

Hotel Bharvan Saravan
15 The Strand Croydon
RSVP by Sunday 4 March to

contact@olderdykes.org

Retiring Women

Cafe Lunch

12pm Friday 23 February

No venue chosen yet. For more information email

contact@olderdykes.org

Out & About

A monthly social group in the Sydney area. For details about the February event, please email contact@olderdykes.org.

Lemon Zest Picnic

5pm Saturday 10 February

Wentworth Falls Lake (Blue Mountains)

BYO food to share, whatever you want to drink, and bring a friend.

RSVP to pamela.lemonzest@gmail.com

Website: www.bmlemonzest.org

Planning for your Future: A Free Event for LGBTI People 55 Plus

10.30am to 5pm Saturday 3 February

Glebe Town Hall, 160 St Johns Road

Bookings essential. RSVP by Thursday 1 February to Manjusha on 9206 2107 or email mmerrymaker@acon.org.au

There will be a Q&A and presentations by service providers, health professionals and legal services. Meet new friends and share a delicious lunch.

Social meet ups for LGBTIQ over 55s

12 pm Wednesday 21 February 2018

Venue: St Josephs - The Crypt, Newtown

Please bring a plate of food to share, if you can. Some refreshments will be provided.

Organised by Inner West Council

Lazy Sunday – Women’s Picnic

Sunday, February 11 at 2 PM - 5 PM

Enmore Park

Marrickville, corner Victoria Road/Black Street

Relax at a luscious summer picnic in Enmore Park. Bring your kids, your dogs, your friends and a picnic lunch as we lounge about in the summer sun. Acoustic musicians, laid back DJs and chillout tunes will serenade us as we live our best damn lives.

All LGBTIQ women, and our friends and families, are welcome. Don’t forget to bring your swimmers for the nearby Annette Kellerman Aquatic Centre.

We will also play a game of backyard cricket, muck about with a six-aside soccer game and probably get involved with a game of bowls if we are feeling like it.

If you’re not the sporty type, lay back in comfy outdoor bean bags while beautiful women (aka ACON staff) serve you free fruit platters.

This event is part of ACON’s #TalkTouchTest breast cancer campaign, and we would love to see you there.

The picnic will be in Enmore Park, corner Victoria Road/Black Street, close to the Annette Kellerman Aquatic Centre and the children’s playground.

The Annette Kellerman Aquatic Centre’s (AKAC) homepage recommends transport options www.akac.com.au/contact



Discussion Report

Favourite books

For our October Dinner and Discussion evening Jan had invited us to talk about our favourite books: fun, sexy, serious, kid stuff, cook books, favourite author, whatever. And a good number of us took up the invitation!

It was fascinating to listen to women talk with enthusiasm (and sometimes passion) about the books that had made a difference in their lives, or were such favourites that they had to be read again and again. They included everything from classics to children’s books and everything in between. Delicious.

After we’d gone around the group, Jan talked briefly about How to Start Your Own Book Club, with notes to take home.

Jan had also invited us to bring along books to give away and at the end of the evening – it was fun to pick over the diverse publications on display, choosing books we’d not normally read.

Interested in joining a book group?

- See if any of your friends have a space in their group.
- Check to see if your local library runs any groups.
- See if the local library has a notice board where groups are listed and where interested readers can enquire.

- Find an Open group: Friends of Balmain Library is an open group and so is the group at SMSA in Pitt Street. 'Open' means that people can drop in without being a member and may not have read the book in advance.
- Try a website or [Meetup.com](https://www.meetup.com). Or use the Ten Forty Matrix Contact list.

Venue and numbers

- If the group meets at a private home 8 to 10 members is a comfortable number and allows for absences and dropouts. In general 8-10 members is also good for easy discussion. With more than that you really need a discussion leader/facilitator to make sure everyone gets a chance to contribute.
- If you use a public location such as a small meeting room at library, local hall or pub or club, you can probably cater for larger numbers. It's good to find a free venue.

Discussion leader/facilitator

Even with small friendship groups it is useful to have one person nominally in charge, so that discussion can be focussed on the book rather than becoming a group chat only. This person can also be the discussion leader, introducing the book, giving its background (wonders of Wikipedia). Or this task can be given to the person who nominated the book.

Frequency of meetings

Most groups seem to meet monthly. With longer periods momentum seems to get lost. Public holidays can affect meeting dates, not to mention members' own busy schedules. If the period between meetings is too short members may have trouble finding/ reading the book. New titles are expensive and really old ones are hard to find unless they are classics.

Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body and so there are countless benefits we receive the more we read.

Choice of books

- Some groups have a speaker on the day who introduces a favourite book.
- Others work from meeting to meeting nominating/handing out books for the next meeting.
- Some prepare a list for six or even 12 months ahead.
- Some read books only in certain genres: travel, detective stories, prize winners, non-fiction, feminist, lesbian, classics - or may rely on suggestions from members.

Supply of books

- Some libraries will supply books for groups.
- Some groups have a kitty to buy books, which they then donate to the library.

Contact Jan ambrosia@bigpond.com for more information.

An overview of Ten Forty

Jan opened the 30th birthday festivities with the following overview of Ten Forty.



Ten years of feminism: Forty years of age was the origin of our title way back at Lake Cullulleraine in 1987, where feminists

aged from 40 to 70 arrived from Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide and Western Australia for the inaugural conference at a location fairly central to all states.

For the next few years, annual conferences were held in different states. In NSW a small group began fundraising efforts to enable members to meet the cost of travelling to conferences in distant locations such as Perth and Alice Springs. This led to Sydney women organising a greater range of regular social and political events in Sydney, including mini-conferences, attendance at Mardi Gras, IWD, and so on.

Then a need was seen for housing for Older Dykes so we set up an incorporated body, Ten Forty Matrix Inc. (the Matrix bit we borrowed from a group in WA). After a period of fundraising and a small survey we found that the needs and desires of our group were too diverse and funding too hard, so the group was wound up. The demands of being an incorporated body were also too time-consuming and expensive.

With the few thousand dollars left over from the Ten Forty Matrix Inc. we established a website. Skilled web-designers were employed for the initial phase before volunteers, called the Websisters, took over of the olderdykes.org site. Websisters also produce the bimonthly newsletter and manages the Contact e-list which now has over 600 members and is regularly used to keep members informed about events.

The future

We now have a number of regular activities: Dinner and Discussion at Haberfield, Dykes for Dinner, Out and About and Retiring Women, plus we are now an incorporated body – Ten Forty Matrix Inc. – set up to manage a small legacy bequeathed to Ten Forty by Julie Hacker. These funds are managed by a Committee and used to subsidise activities such as weekend camps, social events outside Sydney, and our 30th birthday party.

One of the problems for we lesbians over forty is the fact we are scattered all over Sydney; transport is sometimes a problem and ideally we need local area groups to meet up. While many of us are out and about in our communities I believe most of us enjoy some exclusively lesbian company and not all are keen on the bar scene. And by the way, many women have met their partners through our groups.

So, we need to maintain a central body to support the work of the Websisters and the work of the Coordination Group, which manages the Haberfield Saturday nights. Join a group, start a group, link up with the Coordination Group and Websisters: we always need new blood. And give us donations and bequests so we can keep the fun going. Send your details to Contact.

Remember, that for us:

Togetherness is political.

Jan

Celebrating Thirty Years of Ten Forty

With small grants from ACON and Mental Health Month supplemented by Ten Forty Matrix, our 30th birthday party was certainly one to remember. Held in the Summer Hill Community Centre and catered for by local cafe. What a great party!



Our 30th Birthday Celebration Party on Saturday afternoon 7 October 2017 provided 86 older lesbians with a wonderful opportunity to celebrate our lives, delight in each other's company, reconnect with old friends, and make new ones.

Having a dedicated group of volunteers, primarily organised by Pearlie, to welcome party-goers at the door with name tags and information set the warm and friendly tone that continued throughout the day.

Helen, our entertaining Mistress of Ceremonies, had the entire audience in her hands as she conducted a little 'show and tell'



2017 AGM

There was a very good roll-up to our fourth Ten Forty Matrix Inc. Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 25 November.

Following an Acknowledgement of Country by Sylvia, Pearlie presented the Annual Report, including an overview of activities held throughout the year. (Read her report [this page](#).)

Following the Treasurers Report, three special resolutions to change the constitution were agreed to:

(33) Appointment of proxies: Members voted unanimously to remove Proxy Voting from the Constitution. (Any members who cannot attend the AGM will be invited to email their responses to key issues.)

(14 (2)) Committee numbers: Members voted unanimously to increase the total number of Committee members from 7 to 10.

(20 (5)) Quorum for Committee meetings: Members voted unanimously for 5 members of the Committee to constitute a quorum for the transaction of the business of a meeting of the Committee.

Committee members elected unopposed were: Jan, Orsolina, Dorothy, Wendy, Maree, Kel, Sylvia, Pearlie, Diann, Helen. The roles of Chairperson, Deputy Chair, Secretary and Treasurer were allocated at the Committee's first meeting in January.

Members questioned the Committee about future plans. Could, for example, Ten Forty Matrix engage in community activities, e.g. mentoring, education support? It was generally agreed that the idea has merit but the reality is we have limited funds and are all volunteers.

The merger: Prior to the formal meeting women discussed the proposed merger between Ten Forty Matrix (which has never existed legally and which doesn't have a formal membership base) and Ten Forty Matrix Inc., (to which women pay a membership fee.) The consensus was to merge, and for the organisation to simply be known as Ten Forty Matrix. There is now only one bank account, instead of two.

To solve the issue of membership, it was agreed to have two categories of membership: Financial Members and Casual Members. Financial members will pay an annual fee of \$10 unwaged and \$20 waged, due on 1 April each year. The benefits of being a financial

member include receiving a subsidy for special fee-paying events and activities, and having voting rights at the AGM. Casual Members are welcome to attend all fee-paying events and activities, but will not receive subsidies and will not have voting rights.

The bi-monthly Dinner and Discussion for Older Lesbians will now cost less, with a gold coin donation replacing the previous fee of \$5/\$10. Food to share will remain.

Following a brief discussion of possible subsidized excursions and events for 2018, which will be decided upon by the Committee, we adjourned to the local Thai restaurant for a rather noisy but delicious dinner.

Chairperson's Report

Ten Forty Matrix Inc. for Year Ended 31 October 2017

This year our Committee has worked hard to get the best value from Julie Hacker's original bequest by way of investing part of the sum total whilst at the same time spending, unstintingly, on what was needed for each event, and keeping the aim of our constitution in mind ... to promote the wellbeing of older women in NSW who identify as lesbians.

This is, in effect, a balancing act. Preserve the money? Spend the money? Hope others

might add to the funds, or spend our way out of funds and out of a job? It is an interesting dilemma.

For the first time since we became incorporated, our association was successful in attracting two grants to help with the cost of activities: one from Mental Health Month for \$1000 and \$500 from ACON. Both grants proved invaluable in defraying the cost of our 30th Birthday Party.

In March 18 women gathered in Canberra. We stayed two nights at a caravan park in a range of accommodation and enjoyed an evening meal on the first night at a great Thai restaurant. The next day we attended the Versailles exhibition at the National Art Gallery, followed by lunch at the Canberra Southern Cross Club.

In September 30 women came to a comfortable bush-setting venue at Vision Valley, situated near Berowra Waters. Again we arranged two nights' accommodation and this included all meals as well.

But our biggest event this year, and probably the best-attended event of the past three years was Ten Forty Matrix's 30th birthday celebration on 7th November. The party was attended by 86 women and, from the feedback we received then and since, it is clear that this was an outstandingly successful event.

On behalf of the committee I want to thank the many women who stepped in to give us a hand before and during the party. It was

a mammoth 'do' as far as organising goes, with so many things that had to be done beforehand as well as throughout the day. I can only stress that it is this kind of support and co-operation the committee needs and values greatly. The importance of us all pulling together will ensure we can continue to have good outcomes.

I have done a rough calculation, adding together the ages of those of us on the committee and as a modest total I have arrived at a sum of 431 years. That's a lot of years and a lot of experience so I do think it is commendable that we are still going strong, despite gravity's pull, and ageing bodies that defy our will to just get on with things. So, bearing this in mind, I want to thank each member of this year's committee for their commitment and loyalty and plain hard work. I conclude this report by letting you all know that in 2015 we had 73 financial members, the following year we had 82 and now, in 2017, we have 93 members.

Pearlie

Coastal Fringe Exhibition 2018 -7 January

Each year Jack Draper and Sand Hall have organised an exhibition of their well-loved art work. As long time Ten Forty Matrix members and well known Wollongong lesbian feminist activists many of us have seen and bought their work. This exhibition included

work by Wolf, Jack's daughter, Edith, her mother and friend Chris Melmouth. Following the official opening by Wolf, there was a book launch of the recent Long Breast Publication, *On for Young and Old* which contains writings by radical lesbian feminists of all ages. The short entries provide insights into the lives of living radical lesbian feminist activists and some of those who have died.

The art work consisted of paintings, drawings, photographs, silk screen art, sculptures, cards, printed T-shirts and bags. Apart from the art to delight us were plates of various delicious homemade cakes, cheese and dips and a splendid fruit platter.

I loved the Wollongong scenes of places painted by Edith and the amazing canvas-mounted photographs of The Royal National Park by Sand. I could almost feel the texture of the rocks. Jack's wonderful women and peace symbols in native flowers, printed on T-shirts were a delight. I loved the strength in Wolf's paintings, particularly the tattooed woman. Chris is on a winner with her delicate ceramic birds which were snapped up quickly by buyers.

It was also wonderful to see so many well-known faces amongst the large crowd of interested participants. Congratulations to all the artists on a wonderful exhibition.

Sylvia

Let's talk tough stuff!

What would you call it? A necessary evil? Maybe a leech that has attached itself to our daily lives and just won't let go?

I am talking about plastic and its many derivatives. Like that transparent bag with the zip lock top that we put our sandwiches in ... so handy, so convenient. Not so good for the environment.

And the kitchen rubbish we throw out. What do you put yours in? Shopping? Have you made the move to cloth bags yet for your groceries? And do you groan when you see other people's supermarket trolleys stacked high with goods packed to brimming capacity in grey plastic bags? I know I do.

I have only mentioned a few examples here. How many more can you think of? The question is can we cut down our dependence on plastic products? Or should we even try?

Would you like to participate with us in a month long exploration of how much we actually use plastic products and how we can reduce/do away with/ or become more aware of alternatives.

We are suggesting the month of May as a kind of research project, where we document our findings and share as widely as possible what we have learned and any tips we might have discovered.

You might want to keep a diary, nothing dramatic, just notes to keep your thoughts

in some order. Or perhaps you would like to write your comments on our Facebook page? Another idea would be to write letters/notes for our newsletter. Make it funny or serious.

We could even have a special edition devoted to what we have learned.

So what do you say? Does this sound like a good idea? Please let us know.

For more ideas: www.theguardian.com/environment/2018/jan/17/is-it-possible-to-live-without-plastic-readers-tips-for-tip-free-living?CMP=share_btn_fb

Pearlie



Marriage, why bother?

I've heard from many lesbian feminist friends that the state affords lesbian couples the exact same right as it does married couples, and since I don't want the state to have anything to do with my personal affairs, and I'm fundamentally against marriage, why would I bother to get married?

True, but while married and de facto relationships largely have equal standing before the law, only marriage is immediate and undeniable.

Difficulties for de facto couples can arise from the complex inter-relationship

between "burden of proof" requirements, institutionalised homophobia, and the sticky situations that can often arise in interpersonal or family conflict.

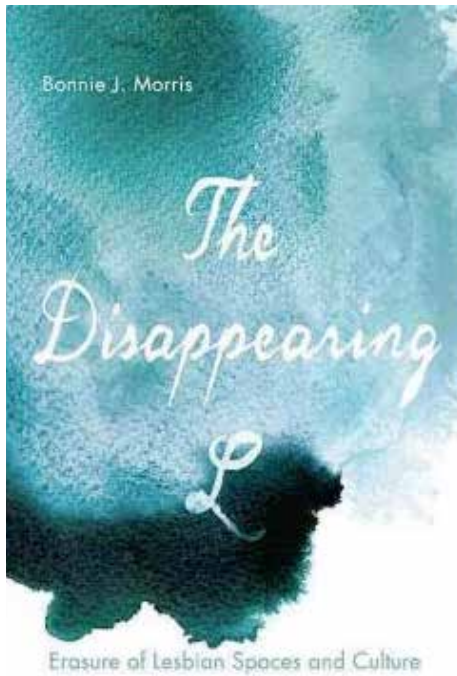
The process of providing evidence to prove a de facto relationship is huge. It can include providing banking statements, evidence of living arrangements and even 'proof of love' – diaries, photographs and social media messaging can all be part of this.

Sadly, the times when marital status matters most are likely to be times of grief or high stress. To compound this, there are many examples of a couple's "de facto" status being challenged by one partner's family of origin. Marriage, on the other hand, makes these things uncomplicated.

As a lesbian in her seventies, it makes me think a secret wedding with a couple of trusted friends as our witnesses might be the way to go. I could keep my political convictions and make life simpler at the same time!

Anon.





The Disappearing L: Erasure of Lesbian Spaces and Culture

by Bonnie J. Morris

Investigates the rise and fall of US American lesbian cultural institutions since the 1970s.

LGBT Americans now enjoy the right to marry—but what will we remember about the vibrant cultural spaces that lesbian activists created in the 1970s, 80s, and 90s? Most are vanishing from the calendar—and from recent memory.

The Disappearing L explores the rise and fall of the hugely popular women-only

concerts, festivals, bookstores, and support spaces built by and for lesbians in the era of woman-identified activism. Through the stories unfolding in these chapters, anyone unfamiliar with the Michigan festival, Olivia Records, or the women's bookstores once dotting the urban landscape will gain a better understanding of the era in which artists and activists first dared to celebrate lesbian lives. This book offers the backstory to the culture we are losing to mainstreaming and assimilation. Through interviews with older activists, it also responds to recent attacks on lesbian feminists who are being made to feel that they've hit their cultural expiration date. www.goodreads.com/book/show/28801606-the-disappearing-l

LGBTQIA+

Dennis Altman argues that 'the term 'LGBTI' confuses desire, behaviour and identity – it's time for a rethink'.

The current Melbourne Midsumma Festival program refers to "LGBTQIA+" in an attempt to incorporate everyone with "diverse gender and sexuality". But there is a risk of becoming so inclusive that the term loses all meaning. Adding letters to the acronym simply hides the complex interconnections of desire, behaviour and identity in everyday life.

Read all the article: theconversation.com/the-term-lgbti-confuses-desire-behaviour-and-identity-its-time-for-a-rethink

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 Matrix 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.

You can pay an annual fee to join Ten Forty Matrix, or you can participate as a casual member. If you want to receive regular information about our activities and the free bi-monthly newsletter join our mailing list www.olderdykes.org/maillist/?p=subscribe

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: Ten Forty Matrix committee members and others

Telephone contact: Jan 9810 1862

Utilities box: Sylvia and Gillian

Money Management: Kel

Websisters: Jan, Ruth, Dorothy, Diann,

Sandy

Newsletter: editing and layout Ruth and Dorothy