

# Ten Forty Newsletter

July 2017

[www.olderdykes.org](http://www.olderdykes.org)

## Dinner and Discussion

6pm Saturday 5 August 2017

### Mental Health First Aid

Guest speaker: Fiona Price

Have you ever known someone you care about who seems to be developing a mental health problem and you haven't known how to respond?

Fiona will explain the elements of Mental Health First Aid and provide strategies to support a person who is experiencing a mental health problem. Please do come along and help make Fiona's visit a success Mervyn Fletcher Hall, 81 Dalhousie Street (cnr Dixon St), Haberfield.

BYO food to share and your own drinks.

Entry fee: \$10 fully waged, \$5 concession.

Entry to the Mervyn Fletcher hall is in Dixon Street, which has unrestricted parking after 6pm. By bus, catch the 436 or 438 buses which set down on the corner of Ramsay Road and Dalhousie Street.

## Dykes for Dinner

6.30pm Thursday 10 August 2017

Thai Power

220 Addison Rd, Marrickville

RSVP by Sunday 6 August to

[contact@olderdykes.org](mailto:contact@olderdykes.org)

6.30pm Thursday 14 September 2017

Love Fish Seafood Restaurant

580 Darling St, Rozelle

RSVP by Sunday 10 September to

[contact@olderdykes.org](mailto:contact@olderdykes.org)

## Report on Lesbian Quiz night

It was my first Ten Forty-related quiz and I enjoyed the night in general. I didn't know very many women there to be honest. I thought the questions were excellently difficult, for me at least, if not for the rest of the table, but Wendy, Kathy, Diann and Rob have serious feminist credentials between them so we did OK and came in second I think.

In truth I learnt a lot, especially regarding Australian-based lesbian/feminist magazines because I subscribed to Spare Rib (English) from the early 70s through to the late 80s and also an American one, the name of which escaped me during the quiz but I now recognise as Lesbian Network. I also loved the history questions and could even answer a few ... I knew the Hedy Lamarr one, for example, but I think only because it was obscure enough to hold my interest.

I also enjoyed the food on offer and thought Sylvia an excellent presenter. She brings just the right amount of cheeky

humour to most things she does and she got the balance right on this particular night.

I was disappointed with the turn-up, however, I'd expected a larger attendance.

### Maree

Below are some of the questions prepared by Viviane and Sylvia with answers below:

- (a) Which Greek god gave birth to a virgin goddess from his head?  
(b) What was her name?
- (a) Which ancient civilisation had a cat goddess?  
(b) What was the cat's name?
- In many ancient societies there was a female trinity with different names, what were the three aspects of this trinity?
- What is the name of the Hindu goddess of creation, preservation and destruction?
- What are the Roman names of these Greek goddesses:  
(a) Aphrodite  
(b) Artemisa  
(c) Hera

### Answers

- |                  |                 |
|------------------|-----------------|
| 1. (a) Zeus      | 3. Virgin/Maid, |
| (b) Athene. Zeus | Mother, Crone   |
| actually         | 4. Kali         |
| swallowed her    | 5. (a) Venus    |
| mother Metis     | (b) Dianna      |
| 2. (a) Egyptian  | (c) Juno        |
| (b) Bast         |                 |

## Ten Pin Bowling

**Sunday 14 May 2017**

Although it was Mother's Day 16 women turned up for two games of ten pin bowling, at Strathfield Superbowl, Liverpool Road, South Strathfield.

There was a wide spread of talent and ability, but for nearly two hours we all had fun rolling the bowl and testing our skill at getting hits on the pins. No easy feat. The balls are heavy and the floor slippy. One woman took a spill but fortunately was not injured.

Everyone agreed it was a fun activity and we should program another bowling event in six months.

**Sylvia**



## Photos invite reflections and recollections

At every Ten Forty event over the past 30 years women have taken photos.

By now there must now be thousands of them out there.

### But where are they?

We are planning photographic displays for our 30th birthday celebrations in October and would love to include photos from your collection.

Please go through your albums. If you find photos you are happy to share scan them and email to

[contact@olderdykes.org](mailto:contact@olderdykes.org)

with a brief outline of when and where the photo was taken.

## Celebrating our 30th birthday in style

**Friday 15 September to  
Sunday 17 September 2017**

A subsidised weekend away at Vision Valley, Arcadia, one hour north of Sydney. (Ten Forty Matrix Inc. members receive a subsidy but anyone involved in Ten Forty can attend and pay full price.)

**Sunday October 22**

A free daytime celebration involving lunch, entertainment, photo displays from the past 30 years, and more (open to everyone).

**Further details of these events will be sent out via Contact**



## Forgetting

by Meg

October 2016

I carry the plague of this generation;  
ageing, losing it, forgetting

Not contagious  
but alone

And not alone.

Blessedly, not alone.

You are still here.

Wondering what happens

In my head

Shrivelling brain cells

An arbitrary emptying

Of connections.

And aware, perhaps, of

Representing

a warning,

a fearful warning,

Symbol of what might befall

some other ageing sisters.

## Vale Meg 1938 - 2017

Meg, one of our finest, was farewelled at the Eastern Suburbs Crematorium on Friday 2 June.

The chapel was packed that cold day with old and new friends to say goodbye to a woman of many different interests and passions: an

academic, a lesbian and feminist activist, a co-parent, an angler, a player of cards, a gardener and a friend.

As we entered the chapel, each person was given a lavender ribbon made by Dottie, an order of service, and the words to *We'll Meet Again*, which we sang later around Meg's coffin.

Some sat quietly throughout the service while others took up Pearlie's invitation to share our thoughts as we watched Meg's life unfold on screen as a daughter, a sister, an academic, and as a lover and a friend. Her values as both a feminist and lesbian activist, and as a fierce advocate for refugees and Aborigines was also on display during the service, conducted by Pearlie, her partner of 31 years.

Krystyna said that for her, Meg's funeral was not just a celebration of Meg's life, it gave us all the opportunity to reconcile our loss and to acknowledge the strength she showed in pursuing her decision to suicide and her protection of Pearlie from any legal ramifications that may have followed her actions.

Alison said: 'Meg's funeral was a beautiful reminder of how precious love, life, and the sisterhood is to me, and how well and ethically she'd lived her life. Meg was an inspiration.'

'I thought the funeral service went very well' said Diann, 'the slide show worked well and I thought Pearlie was the perfect celebrant. All in all, it was a loving farewell to

a brave woman whose final desire was to die with dignity.'

Most apparent at this celebration of a life well lived, was not sadness as such but the celebration it was of Meg's wonderfully rich life and the depth of the love and respect we had for her.

A wake for Meg was held afterwards in the reception area, and included the two special cakes made by Hildegard.

*Compiled by Maree*

### Tribute from Sylvia

I will always think of Meg with her warm smile and scintillating intelligence. Her strong lesbian feminist commitment and courage facing death is a role model for all.

### Words from Diann

Meg was so good at political analysis; she definitely 'walked the walk' as well, not just talked the talk. In other words, she really stuck to her commitments. Meg was also brave in her desire to die with dignity.

### Recollection of a one-off woman

Meg and I became close after she became a volunteer with the Community Visitors Scheme I coordinate. For over three years she volunteered to visit Joyce (not her real name), who was living in an aged care home. With great warmth Joyce always said, "I love you Meg" when Meg finished each visit.

I saw Meg as an enormously compassionate, encouraging and gentle person. In the last

months of her life I drove her to see Joyce. We spent time after the meeting enjoying deep and interesting conversations interspersed with jokes and laughter.

I loved Meg and so did Joyce. When Joyce and I were talking about Meg after her death, with many tears Joyce said, "There will never be anyone like Meg". I agree with her.

*Philippa*

### **Angling with Meg**

One of my 'connections' with Meg was fishing. She was a 'whiting specialist'. If there were any around it was Meg who caught them. Her delighted smile on those occasions is unforgettable. How we cheered!

Fishing was for Meg a simple activity with friends, a contrast to the busy, involved and demanding life she and Pearlie lived. She loved nature, and enjoyed the sounds and sights of the sea eagles, cormorants and noisy sulphur crested cockatoos when fish were quiet.

The other day Pearlie and I went fishing again. We caught absolutely nothing in the first three hours, but then they started to bite. And guess what? Our last fish was a whiting which Pearlie caught using Meg's fishing rod.

She was definitely with us.

*Anne*

## **Meg to Pearlie – 1992**

### **While you are away ...**

Stroking fingers,  
Moments that linger  
Hands along thighs  
And resulting sighs,  
Kisses deep and slow  
Between us the juices flow ...

These are the things I'll miss  
while you are away.

Coffee cups piled high with milky froth,  
Crafty things of wood and wool  
and cloth. Crossword puzzles,  
Conversations and discussions;  
Whimsical, magical, political,  
And, sometimes as harsh  
as a barking, hurting, cough.

These are the things I'll miss  
while you are away.

Vegetables and garden plants  
And other growing things.  
Books, and yes, technology,  
much of which we may not understand.  
Nature and wild life in our own backyard,

But not the cats that roam and hunt  
And grab the upper hand. These are the  
things I'll miss  
while you are away.

House repairs and holidays  
Tandem rides on cycleways  
and day trips in the car.  
Maps consulted, routes planned  
as we envisage journeys near and far.

These are the things I'll miss  
while you are away.

## **Pearlie to Meg – 2017**

### **Meg of my heart**

These are the things I'll miss  
Now that you are gone.

Stroking fingers  
Moments that linger  
Hands along thighs  
And resulting sighs,  
Kisses deep and slow  
Between us, the juices flow ...

These are the things I'll miss  
Now that you are gone.



Holding hands in the cinema,  
Mini film festivals, two this time?  
Or can we manage three?  
Shall we catch the bus to Newtown Dendy?  
Or go to Norton St early, and take the car?

These are the things I'll miss  
Now that you are gone.

Jigsaw puzzles and Soduku,  
Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday  
Your turn for the newspaper crossword  
and the nine letter word.  
My turn Tuesdays, Thursdays and  
Saturdays. Card games every week,

Meals to prepare.  
Is it our turn or theirs?  
Bi-monthly tournaments of 500:  
You making dips or maybe macaroons,  
Me unfolding card tables,  
Rearranging chairs,  
Still in dressing gowns, both with bad hair.

These are the things I'll miss  
Now that you are gone.

From our window I could see you in the  
Garden. Planting, weeding, watering,  
harvesting, a cold cup of coffee

somewhere nearby.  
And wasn't I in trouble if I threw out the  
dregs. I hadn't finished that ...  
You'd say indignantly.

These are the things I will miss  
Now that you are gone.

Books, so many books. Gleebooks and  
Dymock's, Jan's latest loans, library books  
and gift vouchers.

Reading, always reading,  
We were never slouches  
But the analysis and discussions we had,  
meat and bone to our ideas.

The last book you read, the autobiography  
of Paul Robeson.  
How typical, how political,  
You have always been.

These are the things I will forever miss  
Now that you are gone.



## 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](http://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 the bi-monthly newsletter, email [contact@olderdykes.org](mailto:contact@olderdykes.org) and ask to be put on our mailing list.

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## Newsletter

To receive a free emailed newsletter, please email [contact@olderdykes.org](mailto: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](http://www.olderdykes.org/about_us/newsletters.html)

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## Who currently does what?

Events planning: Diann, Gillian, Wendy, Kel

Contact listing in LOTL: Jan

Utilities box: Sylvia and Gillian

Money Management: Kel

Websisters: Jan, Ruth, Dorothy, Diann,  
Sandy

Newsletter: editing and layout Ruth and Dorothy