



Ten Forty Matrix Newsletter

May 2025

www.olderdykes.org

What's On

Country Lesbians Association

A Zoom event

Sunday 25 May@ 5 PM

Topic: **Topic: Lesbians in History**

CLA is a Zoom event, aimed at connecting older lesbians, wherever in Australia you live. You don't have to live outside of Sydney to join us on Zoom.

If you want to join us, email Diann at maude_au@yahoo.com

Popcorn at the movies

Tuesday 3 June

This group is for anyone who is interested in having company to go to the movies and maybe have coffee or refreshments after the film. Palace Cinemas in Norton Street has \$10 tickets on Tuesdays. We meet on the 1st Tuesday of the month. Hope to see you at the movies.

More details will be sent out on Contact.
Krystyna

Dykes for Dinner

Thursday 12 June@ 6.30pm

Details will come out on Contact

Please RSVP to Fiona
fionarimes@gmail.com

Afternoon events for Older Lesbians

Saturday 14 June 2.30pm- 5.30pm. An Afternoon of Story Telling.

Jimmy Little Community Centre, Cecily Street, Lilyfield

Join us for a special Afternoon Tea at 2.30. Readings begin at 3 pm. Women will read stories and poems about their lives and dreams. There will be a Q & A session afterwards.

Other events for Older Lesbians for your diary

Saturday 2 August 11.00am -3.00pm "Time to Shine" at the Big Indoor Picnic
A celebration of 50 years of lesbian activism
1975-2025 More Details to come

Tuesday 16-Friday 19 September Castlereagh Camp, near Penrith

There will be limited spaces, Ten Forty Members will get information soon and first chance to register.

Saturday 22 November 4pm-8pm Annual General Meeting, special guest and members dinner.

Celebrating International Women's Day Lunch

International Women's Day is on 8 March each year. This year it fell on a Saturday and there were many events on over the weekend. To avoid a clash of events we planned a lunch celebration the following Saturday 15 March.

This was our second International Women's Day Celebration Lunch. Two committee members, Fiona and Diann, went on a search for a good restaurant with room for a crowd and willing to accept a large booking. They found the Dosa Hub in Five Dock.

32 lovely older lesbians arrived and enjoyed greeting friends some they hadn't seen for a while. A few women new to our events came and were made welcome.

Following acknowledgement of country, Sylvia gave information about the origin of IWD, which was first held in 1910, and since then in many countries around the world.

The menu was long and looked delicious and could accommodate our diverse appetites. Many of us ordered one of the many Dosas and they were delicious. It was generally agreed by all that the meals were all very good.

Thanks goes to the Ten Forty Matrix committee who did all the organisational work.

History of International Women's Day 8 March

On 8 March 1908 women garment workers in New York went on strike, against very bad working conditions, long hours and the right to vote. This was the first strike by women. It was a very brave action, as these women needed what little money they got to feed their families. As they bravely demonstrated in the streets of New York they were harassed and attacked by men for their audacity to take political action.

In 1909 International socialist women meeting in Copenhagen, Denmark, decided to honour these brave strikers and other working women by calling for 8 March to be International Women's Day. Marches on this day were organised for 1910 in many cities. There was a famous march in Germany by women against the build-up for the First World War. In 1911 in New York despite the years of struggle for improved conditions by the women shirt makers the ten-floor building went on fire. Due to locked doors, a fire escape that collapsed under the feet of the escaping women and lack of any safety measure, 150 women died in the blaze and many suffered serious injuries. These events spurred on the growth of International Women's Day Celebrations around the world. In 1917 the International Women's Day march in Petrograd helped spark the Russian revolution.

The first International Women's Day march in Australia was held in Sydney in 1926. There were marches and other celebrations held in other Australian cities from that time. However, there was little general recognition of this special day in Australia until the rise of the Second Wave of feminism and formation of the Women's Liberation Movement in the early 1970s. This was when militant marches were held with key demands of the movement. The first major marches were held in many capital cities in 1972.

When in 1974 United Nations nominated 1975 to be International Women's Year with a pro-women government under Whitlam in Australia, and a strong active Women's Liberation Movement the whole year became a series of action-based events. International Women's Day March 8 saw huge crowds of women marching in every capital city and even smaller ones in regional centres. We celebrate fifty years since International Women's Year and commemorate 30 years since the United Nations Women's Conference in Beijing, Declaration and Platform for Action for achieving sex equality.

Today every major city in Australia holds International Day marches and celebrations, as well as many regional centres. Some of the militancy has been lost as wages and conditions for working women have improved, but there are still many problems. As a group women earn much less than men (80% of male rates of pay). Childcare is still a problem, hard to find and

expensive. Many women have only part time work that is insecure, even though they are often the main family breadwinners. Rape and domestic violence have not reduced despite years of struggle by feminists. Also, women are finding their right to their own spaces challenged and the legal system at present supports the right of men to enter a defined women's space, however in the case of the ladies' lounge at MONA in Tasmania 2024 following a tribunal decision to shut down the Ladies Lounge, an appeal to the Supreme Court of Tasmania quashed the case. This is a hopeful sign as many cases have been lost.

Ten Forty Matrix celebrated with a lunch on 15 March. Later in the year a bigger celebration is being planned to honour the lesbian activists of the 50 years since International Women's Year in 1975.

Sylvia



Report on Fun and Games An afternoon event for older lesbians

Saturday 5 April 2025, at the Jimmy Little Community Centre

Around 20 women attended this event, including the volunteer games mistresses who had offered to bring various games and teach those who were new to the game, wanted a refresher or to enjoy playing with others.

Everyone excelled in providing what was not an afternoon tea but a veritable feast that could have fed those present for a few days. So huge thanks to everyone for their generosity and the great food selection.

Diann was mistress of Samba/Canasta and shared her expertise with some new players. The obvious fun that was happening around the card table indicated the objective of the session was definitely met.

Norma had taken on mistress responsibility for backgammon. Her large table of enthusiastic players and learners can now play well and perhaps this is a game for some more learners as some of those present wanted to know more games.

Nerida, a games mistress of renown took on board two games, first Five Crowns, which was played with much conversation and laughter. Followed by tri-ominos which was being enthusiastically played until time to pack up.

Sylvia took responsibility to mistress 500, with two new players and one player needing a refresher, but showed very soon she was a capable player, so we teamed up to help the newbies get a hang on the game. The newbies decided they liked 500 and want to play more and become skilled players.

At the end of the afternoon, it was clear from the spontaneous feedback that this was a successful event and many present wanted to have another similar event.

It was a chance to catch up with friends in a positive environment and particularly in the afternoon. It was also a joy of playing table games with others and having a chance to learn or improve on one's skill.



1974, held at the Mitchell Library, photo by Anna for Tribune

Report on Country Lesbians Association ZOOM – 27 April 2025

What has Feminism done for Lesbians?

It was a lively discussion – explorative and with stories of past activism and attitudes. There was general agreement that feminist groups were a place for lesbians to meet other lesbians, and indeed some women came to their lesbian selves through these associations.

Whilst back in the day (1970s and '80s) feminism was mostly seen as/was white, middle class and hetero - there were exceptions - feminist lesbians.

Feminist groups gave women opportunities to explore our politics, work together, to dare to make changes, and courage to come out as lesbians.

In earlier years of the second wave, lesbian issues were not part of the feminist lexicon, and sometimes lesbians were silenced, even shunned. Gay liberation was male dominated and not always a comfortable place for lesbians. However, with many lesbians being active feminists, lesbians became more visible and eventually our issues became part of the feminist agenda.

Encountering feminist critiques of relationships and roles enabled lesbians who had frequently been in butch and femme roles to find freedoms, redefine lesbianism, and be out and proud.

Overall, we agreed that feminism was a good thing for lesbians!

Lavender.



THANK THE FEMINISTS

Anonymous

(There is a saying Anonymous was a woman, this may well be true)

If you are a woman and ...

- You can vote, thank the feminists
- You went to school beyond compulsory age, even though it was assumed you would get married or you were not worth the cost to your family, thank the feminists
- You were awarded a degree from university instead of a certificate of completion, thank the feminists
- You can do women's studies in tertiary education and/or use feminist theories and research in your study, and work, thank the feminists
- You can apply for any job not just "women's work", thank the feminists
- If you are a lesbian and form an intimate relationship with another woman you can now openly identify as lesbian without being deemed unlawful, your everyday rights are protected in law, thank the feminists
- You can get or give birth control information without going to prison, thank the feminists
- Your doctor, lawyer, minister, judge, car mechanic, bank manager, accountant, mayor, Member of Parliament or Governor is a woman, thank the feminists
- If you are buying a home, you can get a mortgage without having a male guarantor, thank the feminists
- You start your own business and get a loan using only your name and credit history, thank the feminists
- You take your child/children to a child care centre or crèche when you work or need one, thank the feminists
- If you are sexually harassed at work there are sexual harassment laws to protect you, thank the feminists
- If your child is abused or molested or stalked – it is a crime - and you can get police, legal and community services intervention, thank the feminists
- If you are on trial and you are allowed to testify in your own defence, thank the feminists
- You have the right to your own salary even if you are partnered or have a male relative, thank the feminists
- You have parental rights of your children following separation and/or divorce, thank the feminists
- You get a choice in the raising and care of your children rather than your partner or husband having complete control, thank the feminists
- You have the right to refuse sex with your partner, thank the feminists
- If your partner is violent to you or your children, this is now unlawful and the police can charge the perpetrator, thank the feminists
- If your partner is violent and abusive and you need a safe place of shelter in a Women's Refuge, thank the feminists
- If you get raped the trial isn't about your clothes, why you were out at night, or your previous relationships, thank the feminists
- You can breastfeed your baby in a public place and not be excluded or arrested, thank the feminists
- You marry and your rights and identity do not disappear into your husbands' rights, and you can keep your own name if you choose, thank the feminists
- You have the right to keep your medical records confidential from others, thank the feminists
- If you play sport or enjoy outdoor activities you can do so without restrictive clothing, thank the feminists
- You can wear pants/slacks/jeans/ without being asked to wear a skirt in church or work, thank the feminists
- You can choose to be a mother or not in your own time and not at the dictates of a partner, thank the feminists
- You can testify in court about crimes or wrongs your husband/partner has committed, thank the feminists
- You can look forward to a possible lifespan of 80+ not dying in your 20s from childbirth, thank the feminists
- You are and can see yourself as a fully adult human being instead of being seen as a minor who needs to be under the control of a man, **then: *Thank the feminists***



Recruitment for Websisters

Do you enjoy using computers? Would you like to learn how to help look after the Ten Forty website olderdykes.org and our Contact emails?

We are looking for women to join Websisters. We are a very friendly and supportive group, learning and sharing computer skills.

We meet once a month to discuss how things are going and have lunch.

If you are interested, contact Jan
ambrosia@bigpond.com



Amazing Women

The Amazing Lucas Girls is a play based on true events about women factory workers in Ballarat during the First World War, and their opposition to war.

The play begins with Ballarat proudly cheering its men off to battle overseas, and develops to show growing opposition to conscription as the death toll brings the ominous telegram boy to every family's front door.

Two important questions voiced during the play caught my attention: Why are our mothers sending their sons to kill the sons of other mothers? How do we deal with our grief?

The second question was answered by a tree planting programme in Ballarat, an idea put forward by one of the women, who argued that the process of planting and caring for a tree, and watching it grow, was somehow, a consolation. This became Ballarat's Avenue of Honour (with more than 3,000 trees).

Playwright Cate Whittaker presented the play's premiere season at The Sydney Theatre Company during the Herstory Festival, and then in Ballarat.

It's an inspirational tale of ordinary women taking up political struggle, another example of Cate Whittaker's goal of bringing to the stage past battles fought by previous generations of women.

Another of Cate's plays was *Forgotten*, depicting one of the few female uprisings in history, at the Parramatta Female Factory Prison in 1827.

Jacqueline

About Ten Forty and Older Dykes

The first national conference of Ten Forty in the mid-eighties attracted politically active feminists of all hues and sexualities. 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.

Who currently does what?

Events planning: Sylvia, Diann

Contact email list: Diann, Ruth, Julie

Archives: Sylvia and Jan

Money Management: Fiona

Websisters: Jan, Ruth, Diann, Julie

Newsletter: Jacqueline and Diann

Management committee: Jan, Sylvia, Pearlie, Diann, Fiona, Jacqueline, Krystyna

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