



# Ten Forty Matrix Newsletter

September 2022

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

## What's On

### **Dykes for Dinner Thursday 8 September @ 6.30**

Hotel Saravana Bhavan  
15 The Strand  
Croydon

A D4D classic with homestyle Indian and Sri Lankan dishes served in a simple space. The wide menu includes dosai, a pancake made on coconut milk originating from South India.

Parking is available on the surrounding streets and Croydon Station is a 2-minute walk.

Check out the Menu and see you there.

Please RSVP to Fiona

[fionarimes@gmail.com](mailto:fionarimes@gmail.com)

### **Tribal Warrior Cultural Cruise on Sydney Harbour and a visit to Be- lang-le-wool (Clark Island).**

#### **Sunday 11 September 2022**

Ten Forty Matrix has booked a Cultural Tour on Sydney Harbour, with Tribal Warrior, an Aboriginal Organisation. Participants will learn the traditional culture, history, and stories of Sydney Harbour. We will hear stories of the Gadigal, Guringai, Wangal, Cammeraigal, and Wallumedegal people of Sydney harbour and learn the Aboriginal names and meaning of the significant Sydney landmarks, before stepping ashore on Be-lang-le-wool (Clark Island).

For more details and to book, contact Sylvia [skinder@bigpond.net.au](mailto:skinder@bigpond.net.au)

### **Ten Forty AGM Saturday 26 November**

#### **Book Launch 4.30pm Annual General Meeting 5.30 with guest Beatriz Copello Catered meal 6.30pm**

**Prior to the AGM** there will be a book launch of, *CAMP: Australia's pioneer homosexual rights activists*, by Robyn Plaister and Robyn Kennedy.

Rob Plaister will speak about the book.

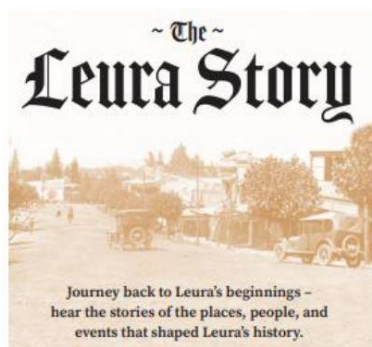
The events of the first Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras parade on 24 June 1978 are now recognized as an important milestone in the history of the Pride movement in Australia. There has been less focus however on the years leading up to 1978; nor is it generally known that many participants in that first Mardi Gras were active members of CAMP. It's more than 50 years since the founding of CAMP. This book aims to celebrate, commemorate, and publicly record the many lesbian

and gay men who created the achievements which are the basis of many of the rights we now have.

### **At 5.30pm Members are invited to the Annual General Meeting.**

**To start our AGM** Beatriz Copello, will read poems from her new book. After the AGM we will have a meal.

## **Trip to Leura WEDNESDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2022**



Come with us for a day in Leura in our magnificent Blue Mountains!

Note: We first planned our day in Leura back in March, but the day was cancelled due to very bad weather. This time, it is Spring, the perfect time to be in Leura.

Ten Forty Matrix have re-booked Sue Collins, Storyteller and Guide from Leura, to take us on her popular guided walking tour. Sue has many entertaining and educational mountain

tales to share with us, from the time the village was first promoted in 1881. It is a gentle walk through the village for approx two hours.

The maximum number for a tour is 15 women. We have booked two tours, one in the morning and another in the afternoon. Bookings are on a first come first served basis. There are still a few places left, so hurry and book!

**Group 1** begins outside Leura Station on the mall side at 10.45 am. Start with a coffee at a café near the Station.

**Group 2** begins outside Leura Station on the mall side at 2.15 pm after lunch. Spend the morning at your leisure.

**Lunch** will be at the Lily Pad Café from 12.30pm, for both Groups.

### **Getting there by train**

Train times have been variable this year. Trains leave for Leura from Central Station. We will advise times nearer to the date.

**Registration** **RSVP** to Chris at

[chris.fox6@gmail.com](mailto:chris.fox6@gmail.com)

Include your name, phone number, member or non-member, AND preferred group. Cost of the tour is free to members of Ten Forty, \$20.00 for non-members.

Non-members please make an electronic transfer of \$20.00 to Ten forty Matrix Inc. to the Commonwealth Bank: BSB 062148, a/c 1052 6147. Add your name and the word Leura.

## **SPRING IN NEWCASTLE WITH 10/40 Tuesday 1 November (Cup Day)**

Staying at 'Crown on Darby' Newcastle. Self-catering apartments to save on food costs. The Plan is a big get-together. We will meet up for events, outings and meals. More specific details will be advertised closer to date.

Room shares: you can advertise via CONTACT. Use email addresses for privacy.

Let us know if you wish to attend.

Contact

Jan [ambrosia@bigpond.com](mailto:ambrosia@bigpond.com)

or

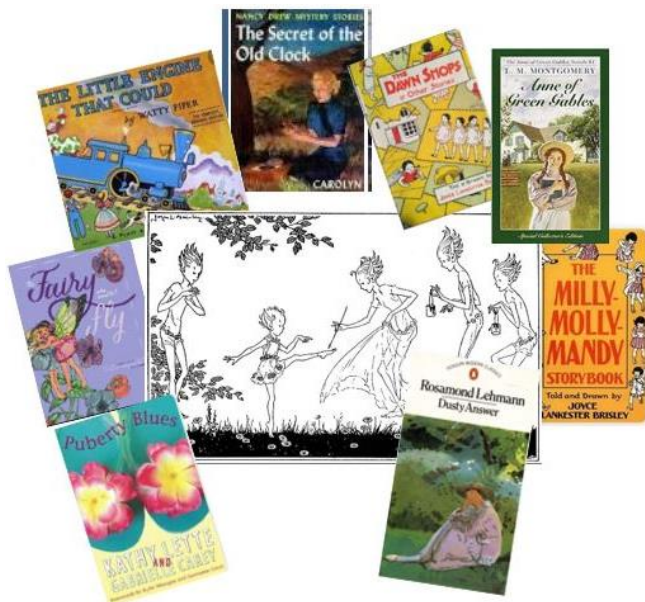
Fiona [fionarimes@gmail.com](mailto:fionarimes@gmail.com)

Please send your name, email address and mobile number (optional). **Put NEWCASTLE TRIP in the subject line**

# Report on Dinner Discussion

## Saturday 13 August

### Books that inspired me as a child



Our esteemed panel was:  
**Pearlie, (also facilitating); Jan, Chris and Glen.**

The fourth of our five Dinner and Discussions for Older Lesbians this year, was inspired by an idea from Jan and Pearlie, both Ten Forty Committee members and book lovers extraordinaire.

Following the acknowledgement of the local indigenous people, of the Wangal group, we were ready to begin. Our new (actually second hand) speaker and microphone, was ready to have its first use.

Pearlie, as facilitator, introduced Jan who told us she was born in a small country town where books were hard to come by back in the 1940s and 50s. Her memorable book was *The Dawn Shops and Other Stories*, told and drawn by Joyce Lankester Brisley published 1949. This author also wrote, *Milly Molly Mandy*. Jan said she enjoyed these stories very much.

The next speaker, Chris, also born in regional NSW, explained that books were a rarity for her until she was about eight years old when, the Newcastle library organised a library service to be opened in a nearby town, for a few hours, two or three times a week. Chris spoke of the two women who ran this library with great fondness. One in particular, Barbara Ward. Chris loved seeing so many new books. Her memorable book was, *Ann of Green Gables*, by Lucy Maud Montgomery, published 1905. The story was based on the author's own life, spent at Green Gables, on Prince Edward Island, in Canada's north east. Chris identified with Ann's love of life, energy and resilience.

Glen, another regional woman, was born in Kuri Kuri in the Hunter region. Her chosen book was *Heidi*, by Joanna Spyri. Heidi is an inspiration as she has to survive the loss of her parents, a grumpy grandfather, whose heart she softens, and being separated from her beloved mountains.

Pearlie, unlike the other speakers was born in Sydney, Bondi Junction to be exact. Her inspiring childhood book was, *The Little Train That Could*, a tale from early white American folklore, intended to teach children about optimism and hard work. For Pearlie the words *I think I can, I thought I could*, are like a mantra she has carried from her early childhood on. Like, *The Little Red Hen*, (the first communist in children's literature?) these books don't have an actual named author, though many writers have published version of the stories over many, many years.

Each speaker then shared a book that inspired them from their teen years.

For Jan it was *Dusty Answer* by Rosamund Lehmann. In the book childhood friendships develop into romantic entanglements that continue as the main character leaves home.

Chris cited *Silas Marner*, by George Eliot, as the book she frequently returns to. Silas Marner is a weaver who is cheated by a friend, loses the woman he loves as a result, has his hard-earned money stolen but finding a small (orphaned) child on his hearth, takes her in and raises her with love. Sounds simple but this is a tale that deals with class, and the social changes of the industrial revolution, as well as the rewards of giving love over money.

For Glen the tragedy of, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles: a pure woman*, by Thomas Hardy, was a book she loved. She said it was a must read. I can only agree. Hardy heard about the hanging of a woman who had killed her violent husband, he felt the woman was victim and drew on this for the character Tess.

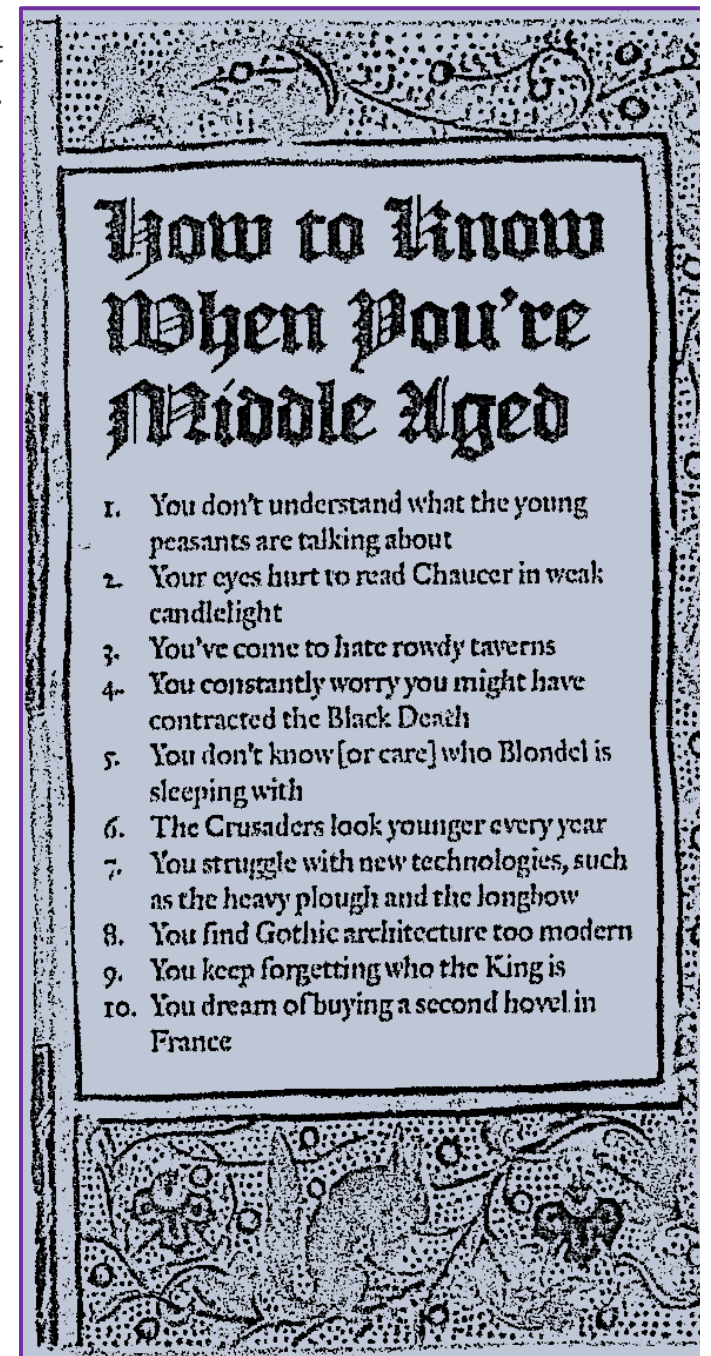
Pearlie shared the memory of the private library that she and her mother used. For two pennies they could borrow a book for up to four weeks, just entering the shop was a thrill. She was drawn to the series of books based on Dimsie, of the Lower IV. There were nine Dimsie books in total. The first one published in 1920, the last one in 1944 when Dimsie, a married woman, makes potions for healing from herbs in her back garden, all to help the war effort. The first book began when Dimsie was ten years old and it was these earlier books that appealed most to Pearlie. Dorita Fairlie Bruce, was the author.

Following our panel of speakers, the rest of the group shared their significant childhood stories. The enthusiasm and interest was such that the event ran 40 minutes overtime! Most of the books mentioned were written by women and had strong female characters, most of whom had to overcome difficulties. We all agreed that libraries were very important institutions in our lives.

Feminists have long recognised the importance of libraries and in Sydney today we have two independent feminist libraries, the Jessie Street Library, and The Women's Library, in Newtown. Both run by volunteers.

Sylvia August 2022

You can listen to the evening on our website. <http://olderdykes.org/category/discussion-group-reports/>



## In Memory of Suzanne Bellamy 22 September 1948–20 June 2022



Virginia Wolf Series, work by Suzanne Bellamy

Feminist, activist, artist, and independent scholar, she was part of the first group of Sydney Women's Liberation from 1969. She worked on the collective of MeJane, the Sydney Women's Liberation newspaper until its last issue. Suzanne taught at Macquarie University in Women's Studies and Politics from 1974-1980 during what many women remember as the great feminist years! She was the national Convenor of the first Women and Labour Conference in 1978. She left academe in 1979 to become a full-time artist and scholar of Virginia Woolf and Gertrude Stein.

Following are some memories of her, shared by those who knew and worked with her.

I first made contact with Suzanne in 1978. She was one of the organisers for the first Women and Labour Conference, held at Macquarie University in Sydney. I lived in Adelaide at the time, so did not have the pleasure of being an activist in her circle. Later, I arranged to visit her in her home at Annandale. She was very welcoming and showed me her pottery den under the house.

I was a little in awe of her, she was already a leading light in the lesbian feminist movement.

I stayed with her again, when she was living on the Monaro High Plains with her partner at the time, Janet Ramsey, and Janet's children. Their lovely house was on land at the foot of hills that resembled a woman lying down. There were many beautiful works of art and pots, I remember I bought a woman figure and some pottery. Janet had made magnificent Kimonos that decorated the walls.

I saw Suzanne many times at various events. I spent some time overseas and lost personal touch with many women as well as Suzanne. There was always something dynamic and powerful about her presence and her art. Her original and exciting art work, will live long after her death, which many of us mourn.

Sylvia

It was in the mid-1970s when I first met Suzanne. We were both visiting Sandra Willson, housed as she was then, in a building outside the main walls of Silverwater prison. I remember how easy it was to talk to her, Sandra and the third visitor, Sue Wills, about life, death and the whole universe.

In 1978, we were both involved in The Awful Truth Show, she as one of the writers and producers, me acting in three of the skits. The show was held at Sydney Uni's Footbridge Theatre and was such a popular production, we were called back for another round of shows a few weeks later. It was around the time of Suzanne's birthday. We were a large crew and all of us donated to help buy Suzanne's first kiln.

Pearlie

**If you knew her and want to share something, send it to Pearlie at [bookwormpjm@gmail.com](mailto:bookwormpjm@gmail.com)**

## In Memory of Sue Wills 1944 - 2022



Photo by Digby Duncan

Rest in Peace Dr Sue Wills, academic, activist, and founding member of the Campaign Against Moral Persecution (CAMP). This tribute is from Jozefa Sobski AM.

"Dear Friends and Fellow Activists,  
It is with a heavy heart that I share the news that Dr Sue Wills passed away peacefully early this morning at the Chris O'Brien's Lifehouse where she had been cared for with pneumonia and the lung cancer which she has battled for some years.

Sue was a friend from the early years of Sydney Women's Liberation. She has devoted herself in the last two decades to gathering documents. Interviewing and accessing archives to write *The First Ten Years of Sydney Women's Liberation*, a

project she commenced with Joyce Stevens AO who passed away in 2014.

Sue was part of the founding group of the Campaign Against Moral Persecution (CAMP) to advocate for the reform of laws against homosexuality in 1970. She and her then partner, Gaby Antolovich appeared in the ABC's documentary series *Chequerboard* in 1972. It was groundbreaking and opened the public debate on homosexuality to the broader community and the welcome reforms which followed over the next decades culminating in same sex marriage being legalised.

She did not remain an activist in CAMP, because of the sexism she experienced. She became an active lesbian feminist from 1972 to the end of the 1990's. She completed her doctorate thesis: *The Politics of Women's Liberation* in 1981 at the University of Sydney where she worked as a tutor in the Department of Government. She held the position of Equal Opportunity Officer at Macquarie University from 1984 and pursued research on sexual violence. Sue, among other activists, was featured in the 2005 film: *The Hidden History of Homosexual Australia*. In 2009, she was featured as a panellist at the 40th Anniversary celebrations for Australia's gay pride and in 2010 was honoured by the AIDS Council of New South Wales (ACON) as a Community

Hero in the annual Honour Awards.

She was a guest speaker at Jessie Street National Women's Library Lunch Hour Talk in November, 2013 when she outlined the challenging writing task she had set herself for *The First Ten Years*.. acknowledging the early work with Joyce on the chronology which was published in issues of the *Australian Feminist Studies* journal. She wanted to write an engaging account so that the technique of novelists was important to her to evoke the exciting and energising world of 1970's Sydney Women's Liberation.

Sue has donated relevant portions of her extensive collection of books and feminist posters to Jessie Street National Women's Library and has been a generous donor for some years. Her home in Leichhardt was her haven and the research base for *The First Ten Years*.. It contains an archive which is a tribute to her commitment and dedication and her tireless efforts to record the history of the women's movement faithfully, without the embellishments which sometimes accompany many feminist activist anecdotes. She was pedantic about facts and often challenged self-serving accounts.

## How to bury your best friend. Or - things to do before you go



Recently one of my oldest friends, DS, died after a long illness. Two of us, her very oldest friend, JC, and myself were left to look after her affairs. DS had left her will in the hands of the NSW Trustee and Guardian (NTAG) but she had told JC she was executor. Confusion! We found ourselves managing the funeral, payment of bills, notification of people, collecting belongings etc and this was in the face of COVID restrictions and problems with her residual family. It was not clear when NTAG would take over but they were not in a hurry and the funeral was urgent. Our job would have been much easier and simpler if we had been able to lay hands on important documents without a major and often fruitless search of her unit. A wonderful local funeral director organised a lovely funeral for us, once we'd sorted out how to pay him and how to deal with a deferred burial in a plot which had become so flooded that a canoe would have been more use than a coffin. So, these dark and emotional days had their funny moments.

### SO PLEASE MAKE IT EASY FOR YOUR FAMILY, EXECUTOR OR OTHER, TO FIND:

1. **YOUR WILL** and your **living will**, not just the bit about turning off the machines, but the rest about the details of your funeral, disposal of your belongings, and so on.
2. **A SUMMARY OF YOUR LIFE STORY FOR YOUR EULOGY.** I had to sit by DS in her dying days scribbling down her life story as a timeline. While I had known her for forty years there was a stack I did not know. Luckily she did not have dementia. Hint: I have already written my own.
3. **PASSWORDS:** a list in a small book would be great.
4. **YOUR MONEY AND HOW TO ACCESS IT.** We had to get cheques signed when DS was almost unable to lift a pen, so that urgent bills and the funeral could be paid. She was very reluctant to do this. She insisted NTAG would do all that. Please make sure that someone has access to money for eventualities and be aware that access to one's bank accounts etc die with you. Money can be freed for the funeral but this is more paperwork.

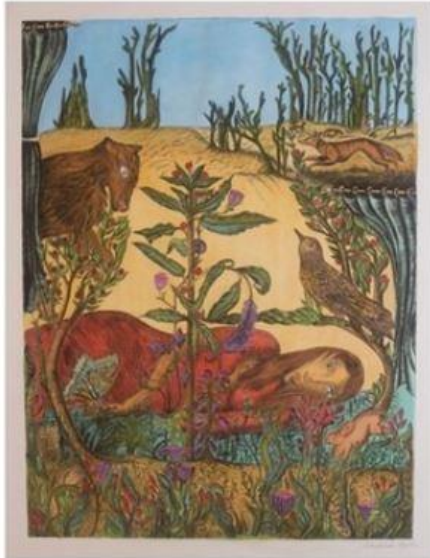
5. **CARDS:** all those cards most of us carry, with PIN numbers if possible,
6. **PAPERS ABOUT MONEY MATTERS:** utility bills, strata docs, insurances etc.
7. **CAR:** keys and documents
8. **PEOPLE TO CONTACT:** essential for the funeral. So address book and phone.
9. **PHONE:** access to mobile and password is essential.
10. **LOCATION OF PAPERS:** consider accessibility and which people to tell.
11. The **NSW TRUSTEE and GUARDIAN** is the body in NSW where you can lodge your will in the event of you not having other options. This may not be the fastest nor cheapest option. But they do seem to offer many services.
12. **CHECK** their website. There is a heap of useful information there and you will need it because dying is finally very bureaucratic.

JA

**PS. There may be confusion about what eulogy actually means: a eulogy can be a simple story not a hymn of praise.**

## Review of Beatriz Capello's latest poetry book

### Witches, Women & Words



Beatriz Copello

Beatriz has written a number of books, both prose and poetry. Attending the book launch at Gleebooks, for this latest gem, I was aware not only of the number of people who'd come that night, but also how diverse was this audience of women and men from a wide range of backgrounds.

I've heard Beatriz read her poems a number of times and humour often plays a part in her style of writing. This book has a more sombre tone but is no less powerful for that.

She wrote this poem with great difficulty, after tripping on a yoga mat and breaking both wrists.

#### WINTER

Ancient souls  
sharing old dreams  
yellow pages  
in this calendar  
of lives long lived ...  
Steps on the road  
of this peaceful dawn  
petals of dry flowers  
flowers which once  
were fresh  
as our hopes.  
Tired bones  
lucid minds  
leaving memories  
which when forgotten  
piece by piece  
will disintegrate  
into the infinite.

I've read the following poem several times and all I can say is that it bowls me over every time. This one poem says so much.

#### SHE TOLD ME

I saved my children,  
and my dogs and the budgie  
but I lost my chooks,  
and my precious horses.  
My husband is angry  
he doesn't speak to me  
because I chose to leave  
and not fight the fire.  
I have no house, no shed,  
my past is dead, as my garden is,  
it went up in flames, only  
the ashes of my photos remain.  
My children want their toys  
the baby wants his blankie  
and wonder why their father  
doesn't play with them.  
I can't sleep and cry  
at nothing. We live  
all in one room at the back  
of my sister's place  
'Get rid of the dogs,  
and the children are noisy,'  
she screams every day.  
I tell myself all will be fine,  
as it always was, but a voice  
inside me whispers.  
'There are wounds that never  
heal.'



If you would like to purchase a copy of this soul-searing collection you can look for it on Amazon or buy direct from the publisher Ginninderra Press. Contact them via their website [www.ginninderrapres.com.au](http://www.ginninderrapres.com.au)

Pearlie

You can read a short interview with her online here

<https://puentesreview.com/2022/08/19/beatriz-copello/>

## **CAMP: Australia's pioneer homosexual rights activists book is to be published in August!**

The events of the first Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras parade on 24 June 1978 are now recognized as an important milestone in the history of the Pride movement in Australia. There has been less focus however on the years leading up to 1978; nor is it generally known that many participants in that first Mardi Gras were active members of CAMP.

It's more than 50 years since the founding of CAMP and this book aims to celebrate, commemorate, and publicly record the many lesbian and gay men who created the achievements which are the basis of many of the rights we now have. We have chosen to do this through the personal stories of some of the individuals who worked together to deliver the changes we see today through their involvement in such activities as taking direct political action, providing community education, organising social activities, phone counselling and publications.

The book is a 300-page hardback which contains in depth interviews with activists of the time, including 35 portrait photographs of CAMP activists, the history of the CAMP movement in Australia illustrated with many

restored archival images from the day. Who knows you may be in one of them!

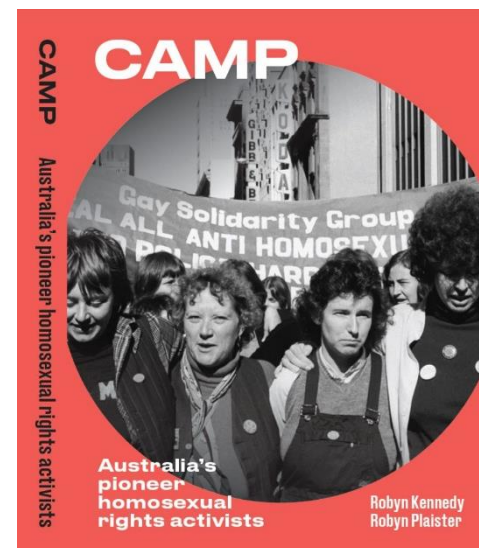
CAMP: Australia's pioneer homosexual rights activists will be launched in September. The launch will be in Sydney at a venue to be confirmed.

Only a limited number of books will be printed so pre-orders are recommended. If you would like copies these can be pre-ordered at \$49.95 per copy plus postage and packaging.

Please feel free to also let your friends know about pre-ordering. For more information see the website

<https://rkam481.wixsite.com/website>

<https://grai.org.au/camp-book-release/>



## The Newsletter

We, Diann and Pearlie, hope you have enjoyed reading the newsletter.

Please keep giving us your feedback and let us know topics of interest you feel need to be shared in the newsletter.

Follow us on FaceBook

[Ten Forty Matrix NSW](#)

Browse our Website  
[www.olderdykes.org](http://www.olderdykes.org)



## 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. 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 <http://www.olderdykes.org> encourages national and international connections between older lesbians. Ten Forty is not an organisation you have to join, though members do get some discounts. If you want to receive regular information about our activities and our bi-monthly newsletter, visit our website and put yourself on our email list.

## Newsletter

The newsletter comes out on our email list. If you do not receive it, email us [contact@olderdykes.org](mailto:contact@olderdykes.org). The web edition and back copies of the newsletter are available for download from our website.

## Who currently does what?

**Events planning:** Sylvia, Diann, Wendy

**Contact email list:** Diann, Julie

**Archives:** Sylvia and Jan

**Money Management:** Fiona

**Websisters:** Jan, Ruth, Diann, Pearlie, Julie

**Newsletter:** editing and layout Pearlie and Diann

**Management committee** Jan, Sylvia, Pearlie, Diann, Fiona, Wendy, Jacqui, Jacqueline