



# Ten Forty Matrix Newsletter

September 2019

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

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## Dinner & Discussion

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### Being Aboriginal, Adopted and a 78er... Terra Nullius

**Saturday 12 October 2019 6.00 – 8.30pm**  
**Presented by Annie**

Annie Pratten is an indigenous, lesbian, feminist, and a long term activist and member of Ten Forty Matrix. She is also a song writer and guitarist.

Australians are facing a time of decisions concerning our indigenous community. The Uluru Statement from the Heart, and proposed referendum on indigenous constitutional recognition. This Dinner and Discussion for Older Lesbians event is timely.

Annie will run an interactive workshop in which we will gain glimpses and discuss our places of ancestry and how they inform

our own herstory, including our herstory around Aboriginal Australia.

**Venue:** Michael Maher Room, 78 Dalhousie Street, Haberfield (please note change of venue across the road from our usual location)

Buses are available: 406, 436, 438, 439 and street parking is available close by.

Gold coin donation

BYO food to share and own drinks, coffee and tea supplied

### Dykes for Dinner

**6.30pm Thursday 10 October**

3 Weeds

197 Evans Street

Rozelle

RSVP by Sun 6 October to

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

**6.30pm Thursday 14 November**

Otto Noorba

79 Glebe Point Road

Glebe

RSVP by Sun 10 November to

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

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## Ten Forty Matrix Inc 2019 Annual General Meeting

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**Saturday 23 November 5.15pm for 5.30pm**

Michael Maher Room, 78 Dalhousie Street, Haberfield (across the road from our regular meeting place).

Lesbians over 40 are welcome to attend the AGM. However, only women who have been financial members of Ten Forty Matrix Inc. for three months prior to the AGM can vote or stand for election to the Management Committee. All votes are to be given in person and there will be no voting by proxy.

If you are a member, you are encouraged to nominate for a position on the Management Committee for a one-year period Contact our Public Officer Loretta Kelly (Kel) at [contact@olderdykes.org](mailto:contact@olderdykes.org) for details.

### Celebration Dinner

At 6.30 pm, join us for a celebration dinner at Ristorante Papa 145 Ramsay St, Haberfield (corner of Dalhousie St.)

RSVP to Sylvia Kinder [contact@olderdykes.org](mailto:contact@olderdykes.org) by 8 November so we know how many to book for the dinner.

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## What Makes You so uniquely You?

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### Report on Dinner and Discussion for Older Lesbians 3 August 2019

#### Presented by Wendy

We began at 6pm. Food and greetings all round.

27 women in attendance. At about 7pm we settled down ready for Wendy Freeman's presentation. Following the acknowledgement of country, the Wangal country of the Gadigal people, there were a few announcements and then we got started.

Wendy Freeman is a long term activist in Ten Forty Matrix and a current member of the Dinner and Discussion for Older Lesbians planning group.

She still works as a counsellor in TAFE and in this capacity has learnt a number of interesting techniques for exploring our personalities.

Wendy started by getting us to talk about what we understood by 'Archetypes'. She then shared some of the theories of archetypes and how finding out which archetypes most closely match our personality we can gain a deeper insight into our personalities. Wendy emphasised that whilst there was a serious side to the quiz activity it was also fun and only a guide.

Wendy had gone to a lot of trouble preparing materials for her presentation. The answers to the three page quiz enabled us to place ourselves within at least three archetypes. We then matched our answers with the 'Summary of Archetypes,' paper handed out by Wendy as well as the paper on 'Personality Archetypes'.



A fun part of the evening was sharing our archetypes. Many of us agreed that the quiz results were pretty accurate. We had a very good discussion. Wendy finished the evening by getting us to comment on our findings and ask any questions. She was given well-deserved applause. Feedback from participants was very positive and all agreed we had had a very enjoyable evening.

**Sylvia**

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## Shelters and Building - Stories of Women's Lands – Review

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In her first book *Amazon Acres, You Beauty - Stories of Women's Lands, Australia* Sand Hall achieved something remarkable. It wasn't until I read the recently released second volume that I realised how remarkable.

Hot off the press, *Shelters and Building - Stories of Women's Lands, Australia Volume 2* contains more stories from women associated in some way or another with the women's lands west of Wauchope in New South Wales.

The book also features a wealth of photos, many taken by Sand herself over the years. The old cliché reckons that a picture is worth a thousand words, but what impressed me is how beautifully the photos and the text each add depth to the other - a testament to Sand's skill at curating.

### What's it like living on the Women's Lands?

As a denizen of The Valley who lived on the lands in the second half of the 1980s, someone would inevitably ask me this question whenever I visited elsewhere. My answer would vary depending on the circumstances: How long have you got? or What exactly is it you want to know? or Well you will really have to go there yourself to answer that question.



*The walls of Margot's shelter are underway, The Valley 1984*

Another not infrequent happening was being reliably informed of some lurid details of Women's Land life by someone who had never lived there and did not know that I did. I have to confess that the opportunity to find out the worst and most ghastly details of the story was just too tempting and I always let them carry on. Only then would I say something like Mmmm. That's really fascinating, I live on the Lands and don't know anything about any of that ...

So you can see that we were dealing with the stuff of myth and legend from the very beginning. Not to be confused with the truth – which is indeed, that there continue to be as many different versions of life on the Women's Lands as there are women to recount them.

As Sand says in her succinct Curator's Notes, the stories, poems and artworks “offer insight, humour, wisdom, diversity of perspectives and styles that tell of individual

and collective vision, adventure and accomplishment over 46 years.”

When another Valley denizen Chris Sitka first read *Shelters and Building*, she wrote: “what I enjoyed most was reading about incidents, experiences and points of view that I have never heard before despite my 46 years of connection to the lands and the women. It reminds me of just how many stories there are in the heads of our sisters waiting to be told and shared.”

Couldn't put it better than either of those two, and therein lies the remarkable nature of Sand's achievement. Through serendipity, connections, considerable perseverance, and her own particular vision, she has managed to tell a collective story that simply could not have been told by any one author.

It's a wider question really: how do you record the history of the many different collective endeavours that have characterised so many of our lives over the years? By that I mean



not just endeavours that involved a number of people, but whose fundamental nature was collective. You get a variety of different participants to tell their stories is at once obvious and mundane, but the neat thing is that the whole picture then becomes much greater than the sum of its parts, with unexpected dimensions and depths. A new description keeps popping into my mind: hologram history.

Recommended reading. Thanks Sand.

## Margot

### Why not a feminist debate about end of life choices?

Over the past four to five decades we have had feminist debates about abortion, reproductive technologies, hormone therapies, pornography and transgender issues, to name but a few. Recently we had debates about marriage equality. Is it time we had a feminist debate about end-of-life choices?

There are some interesting parallels between abortion rights and end-of-life choices. In the 60s and 70s many feminists fought for abortion rights after one or more personal experiences of unwanted pregnancies, which often resulted in backyard or quasi-legal and expensive abortions.

Decades on, older feminist activists are forced to look on in horror as a mentally

or physically ill family member, friend or lover endures intolerable pain and indignity because their health practitioner cannot legally end their torment. The question is, why aren't these personal experiences politicising us and leading us to speak out in support of law reform, as they did around abortion?

(By law reform I'm not referring to the restrictive laws on euthanasia seen in the recent Victorian legislation where, to qualify for an assisted death, two doctors have to guarantee that you'll die of your physical disease within a year. Too bad if you or your loved one has dementia!)

What I'm referring to it is a right of all people, if they choose to exercise it, to self-determination: to die peacefully at a time of their own choosing, with loved ones by their side. As feminists, the quality of our dying is a logical extension of the quality of the life we have demanded for ourselves in other areas of personal and political life.

Many women shy away from the euthanasia debate by arguing that death and dying (particularly by suicide) is such an emotional issue that it can't be discussed calmly, but isn't this what many claimed in the 60s and 70s about abortion? And did it stop us fighting for our rights?

(Suicide is totally different from voluntary euthanasia. Suicide is usually associated with mental illness and the end result of a person feeling so helpless and hopeless that they kill

themselves. Voluntary euthanasia, on the other hand, is a decision made by a person of sound mind wishing to die with dignity.)

Personal autonomy is at the core of Philip Nitschke's philosophy. "It's nothing short of hypocritical for contemporary Australian society to push individual rights and responsibility in everything from employment to parenting, only to renege on the big question of death," he writes in *Killing Me Softly*. He makes the point very strongly that having access to the practicalities of end-of-life options means that older people can get on with the enjoyment of living in the here and now rather than worrying about the pain and suffering that might be around the corner. I couldn't agree more!

I think the debate could be framed as an issue for older women, (or terminally ill younger women) as an extension of earlier activism around personal autonomy, control over our bodies and 'choice' as happened in abortion.

How many Australian feminists who joined the struggle for abortion law reform actively speak out in favour of the freedom to die when we choose? How many work to overturn existing and oppressive euthanasia legislation? How many offer financial support to ensure that euthanasia activists continue the fight?

### **Dorothy**

(who couldn't wait for the law to change)

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## About Ten Forty

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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](http://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](http://www.olderdykes.org/mailList/?p=subscribe)

### 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 [olderdykes.org/newsletters/](http://olderdykes.org/newsletters/)

### Who currently does what?

Events planning: Members of the Ten Forty Matrix committee

Telephone contact: Jan 9810 1862

Utilities box: Sylvia

Money Management: Kel

Websisters: Jan, Ruth, Diann, Pearlie, Barbara, Ping

Newsletter: editing and layout Ruth and Pearlie