



# Ten Forty Matrix Newsletter

December 2020

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

## Dykes for Dinner

Thursday 10 December 6.30 PM

Venue: Hotel Saravana Bavan  
Indian Restaurant. 15 The Strand,  
Croydon. Very close to train  
station.

This has been a past favourite with  
D4D. Many vegetarian options.  
Mild curries available.

Please RSVP to Sue Gee:

[suegee1@optusnet.com.au](mailto:suegee1@optusnet.com.au)

or

0413255483 (text)

Numbers capped at 20 with a  
waitlist. Please let me know if you  
book and can't come at the last  
minute.

## Bookish Conversations with Hayley Katzen featuring Jesse Blackadder's book *Sixty Seconds*

Saturday 5 December at 4.30 – A  
Ten Forty zoom event

Join us for another bookish  
conversation featuring an Australian  
lesbian author this Saturday 5  
December at 4.30.

Jesse Blackadder's *Sixty Seconds*,  
published in the US as *In the Blink of  
an Eye*, has been described as  
'immeasurably beautiful', a  
'masterpiece', 'heartbreaking and  
heartening', 'tragic but life-  
affirming'. It's a haunting,  
redemptive story about forgiveness  
and hope.

Inspired by an event in her own  
family's life, Jesse has created  
complex characters and a page

turner story about the aftermath of  
tragedy. At its heart is the question:  
You can never go back – but can you  
forgive?

Click on this link to listen to Jesse  
discuss *Sixty Seconds* and the story  
behind it on [Conversations with  
Richard Fidler](#).

Jesse, an award-winning Australian  
author of adult and children's novels,  
a screen-writer, literacy advocate  
and freelance journalist, held a  
fascination for adventurous women,  
extreme landscapes, and chilly  
places.

Jesse died in June 2020. In this  
session, her long-time writing group  
friend Hayley Katzen, author of  
*Untethered*, will lead a conversation  
about this profound and beautifully  
crafted book.

RSVP to Diann at  
[maude\\_au@yahoo.com](mailto:maude_au@yahoo.com)

## A walk in the garden

A Ten Forty Outing  
Wednesday 9 December  
10.30 – 11.00 am start. Finish  
mid-afternoon.

**Place:** Circular Quay, Botanical Gardens.

**Meet:** Rossini's Café at the Quay (RHS  
end as you face the Quay)

**Finish line:** Calyx Café at the top of the  
Gardens.

**Transport:** Trains, trams, buses and  
ferries to the Quay. And trains home from  
Macquarie Street. Also 441  
(Art Gallery) bus from QVB in York Street  
takes you to the Art Gallery stop near Top  
of Gardens entrance and also take you  
back to the city.

By car: some parking along Art Gallery  
Road (Mrs Macquarie's Drive)

**The Trail:** Start on the Quay, walk round  
to the Opera House steps, walk along the  
Harbour Edge of the park until the turn  
off to the right up past the ponds, etc to  
the Calyx café for a coffee, look around  
etc.

**Food:** bring your own or buy  
wherever. The Calyx Café has the usual  
COVID space restrictions so booking is not  
a possibility. We eat wherever we find a  
place we like. Advise bringing plastic bag  
or similar in case we have to sit on the  
grass.

**Dress code:** wear a touch of purple so we  
can spot the dyke.

**Weather:** definitely cancelled if wet.

RSVP to Jan at

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

or text 0498 486 677

## Books I want for Christmas

**Saturday 12 December 4 PM**  
**A Ten Forty Zoom event**

A talk about books. What books would  
you recommend?

RSVP to Diann [maude\\_au@yahoo.com](mailto:maude_au@yahoo.com)

## Women in the Bush Update

**December Saturday 5:** Walk Ku-rin-gai  
N.P. Resolute Beach, Mackerel Beach and  
West Head Circuit. Medium/Hard with  
some steep ascent and descents to  
beaches. Approx 6-7km Swimming at  
Resolute and/or Mackerel and West Head  
Beaches. Meet Resolute Picnic Car Park,  
West Head Road. 9am. National park fees  
apply. Projected temperature for  
Saturday is 30 degrees max. If the  
projected temperature maximum is any  
greater the walk length will be changed  
or walk cancelled.

**December Saturday 12** From  
10.30am. Women in the bush picnic. Due  
to Covid Safety we are having the picnic  
at one of the Women and the Bush  
members. (Balmoral may be too  
crowded). She has a pool and decent size  
back yard with shaded area. Only 20  
women on a first come first in basis. BYO  
drink and food. (no share food)

**To book in, contact Sylvia**  
[skinder@bigpond.net.au](mailto:skinder@bigpond.net.au)  
Phone 0438 225 333

## **Report of Ten Forty Zoom Event – What technology have you used to stay connected? Saturday 10 October**

As a person who has limited use of technology and poor skills in using it, I was a bit unsure if this event would interest me. Women shared about resources I have never heard of. But they also gave insights into how they had navigated the complexities of living in a pandemic. These Zoom events themselves are using a technology that only a few of us accessed prior to the pandemic.

It is hard to know who is still having difficulty using this technology, and thus have been excluded from our Zoom Dinner and Discussion for Older Lesbians, 'without the dinner'.

Ten women joined the discussion, facilitated by Orsolina who confessed to being a technophobe! She asked us to share our use of technology in a number of areas; work, communication with others, entertainment, social action or any other ways.

Diann was in charge of enabling the session to happen from the technological perspective.

The participants shared a wide variety of uses and included many aspects of technology that they had found useful during the pandemic. Some of these were traditional uses and others very new. As the meeting progressed it became clear that even the least technically savvy of us were using technology in many different ways.

Facebook and Facebook Messenger were used by many of the women as a way of keeping in contact with others, particularly family.

Zoom has been much used, for author talks, work meetings, as well as meetings of Ten Forty and other lesbian groups, 12 step meetings, and chats with friends while playing cards online. It has been a site for political action against Adani, and for women's issues and Human Rights Groups. One participant is now writing a book with women from different countries as a result of Zoom meetings on the issue of sex robots.

While Zoom is very user friendly there have been problems with its security for sensitive matters.

WhatsApp was another favourite. It is a phone app which is free, used for making phone calls, messaging, and face to face contact. It enables you to send a message to a number of people at once. Some volunteer groups use it for communication. Rainbow dance uses this app. Some women used it for friends and family group communication. You can send photos and talk face to face as well as messages and phone calls.

It was clear when the meeting concluded that the pandemic has had an impact on ways in which we communicate with others. Lesbian Feminists have not sat back waiting for the vaccine, but have dived into the world of technology, finding ways to continue learning, being entertained, continuing their work, engaging with their family and social groups as well as being internationally politically active.

Sylvia Kinder October 2020

## Links to technology women used

Put together by Diann

Some women preferred 'old fashioned' technology, such as the TV and radio. Others also wanted to highlight the need to be vigilant to avoid 'hacking'. And it was suggested that it is not a good idea to put up pics of kids. Below is a list of the technology women used. Each has a link for you to access more info online. Just put your mouse over the link and follow the prompts. If you have actually printed this out, you won't see the links to use them.

[kanopy](#) - watch films on your tv through the library

[Facebook](#)

[Go to Meetings](#) - 12 step meetings use this

[Google docs](#)

[Google Meet](#) - you need a Gmail account

[Google sheets](#) (spreadsheets)

[Hello Talk](#) – learn a language by connecting with a speaker of that language

[Jira Atlassian](#) - Data Sheet/ organiser

[Pinterest](#)

[Rainbow dance](#) - safe, fun and completely inclusive dance experience for the LGBTIQ community

[Slack](#) rozelle neighborhood centre uses this to connect

[Telegram](#) – similar to What'sApp

[Trickster Cards](#) – a site where you can play cards with friends

[Tubi](#) – free movies and tv programmes

[Twitter](#) – some women follow people of interest to them.

[Upwords](#) – great word game to play online with friends. There is a paid version to avoid the ads.

[What's App](#) for keeping in touch with each other.

[Words with friends](#) - Another great word game to play online with friends.

[Zoom](#) some women found that setting it up was complicated

**Some other useful links for learning about technology and instructions on how to use it.**

[Be Connected](#) – This is an Australian Government website. It has very helpful 'how tos' that are easy to follow for beginners.

[GCF learn free](#) – This is a US site, with very helpful 'how tos', using pictures as well, to explain. The link here will take you to their Social Media help. But they also have great step by step help for all aspects of technology, including, using Microsoft Office, web browsers, internet safety, and more.



## The Big Picnic was a Big Success!!



On Saturday 31st October at 11.30am, fifty-six lesbians, socially distanced, could be seen entering Leichhardt Town Hall. On entry their names were noted and temperatures taken. The cavernous hall was set up with twelve, large tables, all carefully spaced to allow safe distance, each table covered with a purple cloth, and a green paper runner, topped with an arrangement of greenery. On the stage, Anne sat to one side and played beautiful music on her cello, setting the tone of cheer and relaxation.

The 10/40 Matrix planning group had been carefully planning this event for several weeks to ensure it was COVID safe, and were there, early on the day, to prepare the hall. When first this idea of a Big Picnic was discussed, the question on our minds was would our age group feel safe enough to come to such a large event?

We promised safety, fun and a great lunch but would that be enough? Well, we were trusted and in they all came. MC, Pearlie, welcomed us all and introduced Annie Pratten, who gave the acknowledgement of Wangal/Gadigal country on which the town hall stands.

Then it was lunch. Lunches were created and delivered by Sam of *All Courses Elite Catering*, each in its own labelled bag. All diets were catered for. Most bags contained sandwiches, wrap, small quiche, salad, cake and fruit stick, suitably packed in recyclable containers. There was general acclaim for this delicious lunch.

The happy buzz of chatter filled the hall, and no work for the COVID marshal as everyone settled in for a good time. Our young comedian, Lily Starr, was greeted warmly. If the laughter that echoed around the hall is anything to go by, Lily proved herself to be a very good comedian indeed.

Then we had prize giving. Alliterate your own name and win a prize. All six prizes were suitable for the Covid-safe occasion; carefully wrapped toilet rolls.

It was clear that having a good laugh and the chance to talk and meet with old and new friends was a great lift to our spirits. Face to face contact is so much more satisfying than Zoom.

After the entertainment some women switched tables to continue making connections with friends. Time passed. Gradually, the hall emptied and the helpers wiped down the tables and chairs and packed things away, after giving careful attention to the other areas we had used. Our small team then had a debrief session at the nearby Royal Hotel.

Our fabulous participants provided excellent feedback and some great ideas for future events. We are hoping next year brings less restrictions and more opportunities for us all to get together.

Sylvia

*Note. This was a free event for lesbians over 40.*

*We thank the Inner West Council for providing Leichhardt Town Hall for free. Some funding came from Way Ahead, as part of our national celebration of Mental Awareness Month, kicking off with World Mental Day on 10th October. The majority of funding for the Big Picnic came from Ten Forty Matrix funds.*

## **Because you want to write Report on Pearlie's writing workshop**

As we now know, one of the big advantages of Zoom is that it has allowed us to have meetings which include locals as well as those from interstate and Pearlie's Writing Workshop at 3pm on Sunday 22 November was no exception. There were ten of us mainly from NSW, as to be expected, and three of us from Victoria ready with our pens and paper to do the exercises and jot down other items of interest.

Pearlie was well prepared and had already emailed out some examples about how we might write about different emotional reactions in various scenarios which got us thinking and, in the mood, beforehand. Pearlie also explained that in this workshop there'd be an emphasis on the process of writing and while we'd be encouraged to write there was no obligation to read what we'd written but she'd be asking us about the process in order for us to get the most out of this experience.

Starting with the advantages of short sharp sentences, Pearlie then took us through

several writing exercises by giving us a scenario which we then had to write out in the first, second and third person, to a time limit, explaining the differences and how they all worked in various ways depending on the viewpoint. And then afterwards encouraged us to give feedback and ask questions which she answered in a clear and understandable way to show how our writing can be given more depth and meaning.

Pearlie also took us through a guided meditative tour where water, a tree, clothing and a game featured and afterwards we explained what all of that had meant to us in quite different ways. And we've got homework. In order to not forget our writing exercises and keep our hand in we have been urged to write out a couple of different scenarios from the point of view (POV) of the main protagonist who has two trains of thought, one being spoken out loud the other as an internal dialogue about the difficult situation at hand.

Many thanks Pearlie for taking the time and making the effort to run this Writing Workshop in such a way that all of us have

not only learnt something and feel encouraged to focus on the written word but it was a delight to see and hear from all of us in our respective bubbles.

Jean Taylor  
Wurundjeri Woiwurrung country Bulleke-  
bec Naarm

PS One of my writing failings, according to *quite* a few people, is my long sentences, (it didn't seem to hurt VW's career any, just saying). Even so, I came away from Pearlle's workshop with a renewed appreciation of the sharp and to the point short sentence, particularly at the beginning of a story. We'll see what happens.



## Hayley Katzen – Untethered Report

On the 17th of October we were delighted to have author Hayley Katzen speak to us about her new book “Untethered”. Hayley discussed the essence of the book, her search for belonging.

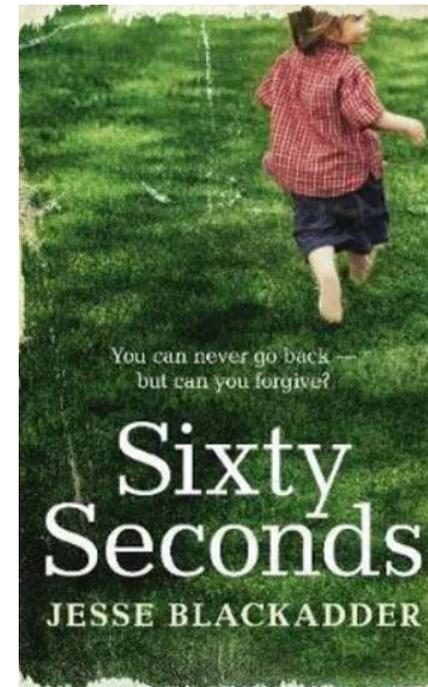
Originally from South Africa, Hayley migrated to Australia, searching for a place to “tether”. She eventually landed in Mullumbimby in Northern NSW, where she met Jen, a farmer. Finally, Hayley had found a place where she belonged, though it came with its challenges.

The Zoom session was attended by 18 women. A lively discussion ensued covering many issues; long term lesbian relationships, living on a farm, writing and belonging, and Hayley's motivation for writing this book, plus her writing process, and evolving understanding about farm life.

The session went so well we have invited Hayley back for another session on the 5th December, this time to discuss the late author, Jessie Blackadder, and her final novel “60 Seconds”

Make a note of that date. Saturday 5th December 4.30pm.

Niki



## Brazen Hussies - a film

Some of you might remember that 10/40 Matrix donated \$2,000 to the production of this film, that has been five years in the making.

I was delighted to be among the audience at the Chauvel cinema, at Paddington, for the first Sydney viewing of this film.

Covering the years from 1965 to 1975, Catherine Dwyer, the writer and director, has somehow managed to get hold of news clips from the era, that for me, were an integral part of the film's appeal.

It's a *no holds barred* type of doco, and all the better for it, interweaving as it does archival footage, photographs and lively personal accounts from a number of activists, though the focus seemed to be more on Victoria than any of the other states.

The film celebrates the Women's Liberation Movement and as Catherine Dwyer said later, in the Q and A that followed the film, she viewed these

women she met as elders and interviewed them as elders. She had set out to learn as much as she could about them.

Consultant for the film was Larissa Behrendt, legal academic, Aboriginal writer, filmmaker and Indigenous rights advocate. You might like to seek out Larissa's memoir *Home*. It's a good read.

I'm not sure if Catherine Dwyer anticipated the wide distribution the film has received, but it is wonderful to see such an important film receiving such mainstream attention.

If you miss this one, you'll regret it.

Pearlie



## Talking Books

Have you been reading a lot in this COVID era? I find it's my obsession; a pile of books by my bed, one in my backpack, another one or two open on the lounge.

I usually can read three or four books at a time but take the disciplined approach. One chapter at a time from each book. No cheating.

I have culled my library several times over but some books I just can't part with.

Kate Millet's *Flying*, was given to me by a former partner, back in 1978. I smile at the inscription she wrote ...

'Single-handed we may repulse them, Together we achieve a victory.'

Have you got favourites too?

Debra Adelaide, in her book entitled *The Innocent Reader* (it came out in 2019), remembers reading her

parent's collection of Reader's Digest Condensed books. She was about five or six years old when she came across a title that puzzled her ...

*From Here to Enter Nity.* Where or what was Nity? The combination of her limited diction, she explains, plus a hyphen break that made one word look like two, handed her a puzzle she tried for quite some time to solve. I suspect that puzzle added to Debra's reading excitement as she sought to find out, by reading whatever she could, about how to enter this place or thing called Nity.

As a child, I had difficulty with two words; colonel and awry and pronounced them kernel and awree, much to my teacher's amusement when I was asked to read aloud one day in second class.

I'm sure you have similar stories to tell.

A friend told me about a very interesting book, *The Woman In The Photograph*, written by Stephanie Butland, (published in 2019)

It's a fascinating read and has an unusual structure. Two women, one dead, the other looking back at the life and aims they shared.

Another, published back in 1997, is worth looking out for ... *Old Books, Rare Friends* subtitled *Two Literary Sleuths and their Shared Passion*, written by Leona Rostenburg and Madeleine Stern. This one is a treasure if you can find it.

Lastly, a crime fiction book, *House of Correction*, written by Nicci French and published in 2020. You may or may not know that the name Nicci French is that of two writers; Nicci Gerard and her partner, Sean French. They have written more than 20 books together to date. This one is a cracker. A woman is accused of murder. She suffers from depression and isn't coherent in any way that will satisfy a police interview, and winds up in jail, awaiting trial. But her fighting spirit is there somewhere and she fights back, from prison and in the court room. But be warned. This is a compelling read. You may stay up all night just reading that little bit more.

Pearlie



## A Niche in Time.

Shy heart never won fair lady. This was the story of my life and if I had a coat of arms this would have been engraved on the bottom: *Coeur timide repousse la belle dame.*

Since very young I had trailed along behind my peers, hopeless at games, buried between the protective covers of books, tolerated by my friends as something of a lost cause. No doubt they saw me as harmless, not competing for the favours of boys, offering a safe listening ear, quiet achiever at school always ready to help with forgotten homework .

But, unknown to them, this skinny, mousy girl with pale blue eyes and nondescript clothes, was deeply and hopelessly obsessed by women. First was my high school French teacher, dark haired, dark eyed, with exotic clothes and a heavy accent. She called me Jeanne. This thrilled me to the core and caused me to toil at French as at no

other subject. Devastated and betrayed when *La Belle Française* went off to get married, I had to make do with the sports mistress , lithe and lovely, but no admirer of my uncoordinated body.

Meandering through university and finally the work force I found a hidey hole in a government department. Over time I fell in love with many women but always at a distance, never taking any initiative.

Even at university where there were heaps of attractive women – by this time I preferred them intellectual with a touch of class – I might circle in their orbit but never made a move. Perhaps my dumb adoration may have been remarked by these lovely creatures but no-one took me up. And perhaps if they had I would have taken to my heels. Or I may not have noticed. In fact I was not a physical person and had no thought of any sort of close contact.

But one day on the bus at a time when my last love object had left the scene, I spied the perfect woman. Dark haired and eyed, my usual preference, understatedly smart, clothes and armed with an elegant brief case, she sat

reading a serious looking book. It was love at first glance. Hiding in my own book, I drank in her details. Holding my breath to see which bus stop was hers, I decided it would be mine too.

Just my luck it was the stop before mine so I leapt off and followed her through a crowded shopping mall and via a few shops and down a side street. Here I had to be careful. My mousiness was good camouflage but the street was almost empty.

I chose to follow her in a purposeful way and then planned to walk past as if to my own destination. This plan was thwarted when she stopped to talk to a woman, perhaps a neighbour, and I had to walk on by. Not daring to go back I cut through back to the mall and sat to have a coffee and work out my next move.

Thus began my Maria project. I now knew a bus route, time of day and approximate home area. I began to bend my life in that direction.

Sometimes I fluked the right bus and one lovely day she caught my bus to work.

Surreptitious snooping, after my quarry got off the bus, made me majorly late for work but now I knew where she worked. I even managed to hide in a shop doorway and take a few blurry photos.

Maria became the focus of my life and I even managed to track down her favourite local coffee place where she met a friend occasionally. By this time I was having to resort to changes of clothes and even glasses and hats to try and avoid detection.

How did you know her name was Maria, you ask, well, I wasn't a researcher for nothing.

One Saturday morning I was sitting at a table in a quiet corner near the cash register when she came in and sat not far away, clearly expecting a friend. I was flicking through a magazine, trying to make my coffee last, and I could see she appeared to be doing the same. To be so close was a moment to be savoured, a moment of quiet happiness.

Suddenly there was a discordant note in the gentle clamour of the coffee crowd.

A scruffy young man had fronted the staff at the cash register shouting a demand for money. I rose to my feet as the man grabbed a pistol from his bag and began swearing and waving the gun at the staff. I stepped back in an attempt to move away. He swung round, saw me and fired. I felt the bullet hit me in the top of my thigh. There was searing pain and I saw blood gushing down my leg as I crumbled to the floor. I heard someone scream that they could not stop the blood. More shouts for police and an ambulance. My eyes were starting to mist over when the face of Maria appeared above me. Her hands stroked my hair, she made calming and soothing noises and encouraged me to hang on. I was fading as I managed to whisper 'Maria, I love you. 'How did you know my name is Maria?' But I had no strength left to answer.

Jan A. © 10.07.2016.

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**On the twelfth Feministmas**

**My true Love gave to me**

**Fair rights and wages**

**Reproductive freedom**

**No victim blaming**

**No body shaming**

**No bullshit diets**

**Gender bias broken**

**Shame free breastfeeding**

**Equality!**

**Proud working mums**

**Male allies**

**No tampon tax**

**And a grope-free Christmas party**

*anonymous from FB*

## The Newsletter

We, Diann and Pearlie, hope you have enjoyed reading our monthly issues of the newsletter. As our Zoom sessions have increased in number and variety, and we are doing more creative things in these sessions, it seems a good time to drop the newsletter back to the more usual pattern of bi-monthly issues.

Covid-19 has affected all our lives in many ways but fortunately, we have learned along the way how to establish good contact within our 10/40 group and beyond. On line communication will never truly replace face to face contact but we're a wily bunch and we well know how to solve problems and face challenges. Our network of older lesbians remains strong and proud, despite this bloody virus.

Please keep giving us your feedback and contributing whatever items of interest you feel need to be shared in the newsletter.

Follow us on FaceBook

[Ten Forty Matrix NSW](#)



## 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. 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 <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 at [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, Niki

**Archives:** Sylvia and Pearlie

**Money Management:** Loretta, Fiona

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

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