



# Ten Forty Matrix Newsletter

April 2012

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

## Our future...

### Dinner and discussion

6.00 pm

Saturday 28 April

**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.**

Because attendance at Dinner and Discussion

events was so poor last year, we decided to conduct a survey of everyone on our Contact list and use

the results as a starting point for planning our future.

The aim of the survey was to find out more about our members, the Ten Forty Matrix activities we enjoy and the activities we would like to see offered.

The survey results are in! And we'll be discussing their implications at our April meeting.

*“the activities we enjoy and the activities we would like to see offered”*

See page three for a full analysis of the survey results. The raw data is available for download from our website at [www.olderdykes.org](http://www.olderdykes.org) for those of you who like statistics.

Entry to the Mervyn Fletcher hall is in Dixon Street. There is unrestricted parking in Dixon St after 6pm.

By bus, catch the 436 or 438 buses which set down on the corner of Ramsay Road and Dalhousie Street. It takes less than half an hour from Central then a 2 minute walk from the bus stop to the hall.

## Dykes for Dinner

Thursday 12 April 2012

6.30pm

Marina Lunga

Italian food

BYO

367 Darling Street Balmain

RSVP to [contact@olderdykes.org](mailto:contact@olderdykes.org) no later than Sunday 8 April

### Please note:

No one is available to organise Dykes for Dinner for either May or June.

Dinners are held on the second Thursday of each month at a restaurant chosen by the person organising it, and advertised through Contact.

If you would like to organise a dinner for May and/or June, please send details to [contact@olderdykes.org](mailto:contact@olderdykes.org) for information about what's involved.



*A blast from the past...*

*Ten Forty contingent at IWD 1997*

# Ten Forty Matrix: Past, present and future

Ten Forty in various guises has been operating out of Sydney since 1990.

It began as the brain-child of three lesbian feminists over forty who decided to hold a national conference called the Ten Forty Conference, (ten plus years of feminism, women over forty) where feminists could come together and talk about ageing and the challenges and changes involved. Forty five feminists between the ages of forty and seventy attended the inaugural national conference at Easter in 1987.

Over the next few years conferences were held in various states, but when travelling interstate became too costly, Sydney women decided to go it alone.

Currently Sydney is the only city where activities and functions going under the name “Ten Forty Matrix” are still held.

The full history is available from [www.olderdykes.org/aboutus/history.html](http://www.olderdykes.org/aboutus/history.html)

## Ten Forty Matrix today

Those of us who have been involved in Ten Forty Matrix over the years have been motivated by one principal aim: to provide a meeting place and contact point for older lesbians.

### What we do

At present we keep older dykes informed through our website, newsletter and email list. We also advertise in LOTL and have informal links with L40 annual conferences.

We currently run the following activities:

- Bi-monthly dinner and discussions at Haberfield
- Monthly Dykes for Dinner
- Social events such as picnics, bird watching, gallery visits

### Who does what:

- Five websisters maintain the website and send out emails on the contact list. In the absence of a planning group they have been making decisions about speakers and dates for the dinner discussion meetings.
- One of the websisters answers telephone queries from our LOTL listing.

- Two members produce the bimonthly newsletter.
- Money is managed by one of our members.
- Dykes for Dinner is organised by one of our members.
- Two members ensure the boxes of catering utensils and name tags arrive at every dinner and discussion.
- Venue booking and key collection is done by whoever is available.

The number of Ten Forty activities and members has waxed and waned over the past 22 years and, with the exception of a few regulars, volunteers have come and gone. Despite frequent invitations to our members to get involved in planning and organising events the same few volunteers do most of the work.

## So, why the survey?

Numbers of women attending meetings have been steadily decreasing. When our dance event in October last year attracted only seven women some of us started to question whether there is a need for Ten Forty Matrix anymore. The best way to find out seemed to be via a survey and we had the offer of skilled help to design it.

A summary of the survey results is on the next page and the full survey responses are available for download from [www.olderdykes.org/aboutus/survey/SurveySummary\\_02192012.pdf](http://www.olderdykes.org/aboutus/survey/SurveySummary_02192012.pdf)

## What's next?

A meeting at Haberfield has been scheduled for Saturday 28 April to discuss the findings of the Survey and to plan for the future, if any. Questions that need to be answered:

- Are there other groups that better meet the social needs of older lesbians?
- Would there be any need to maintain the olderdykes website if there was no Ten Forty Matrix?
- Would there still be a need for the Contact email list?
- Are any members willing to step in and help move Ten Forty Matrix in the directions indicated by the survey results?

No further bookings have been made for Haberfield until the April meeting has taken place.

“...some of us started to question whether there is a need for Ten Forty Matrix anymore.”

# Ten Forty Survey Results

What is provided below is an overview of the results of the survey conducted through Survey Monkey via a link provided by email sent out to the Contact email list from late December 2011 to mid February 2012.

For more in-depth detail, a pdf document of the entire response set is available on the website [www.olderdykes.org/aboutus/survey/SurveySummary\\_02192012.pdf](http://www.olderdykes.org/aboutus/survey/SurveySummary_02192012.pdf)

Overall, the response rate was positive with 84 people attempting the survey and 66 completing it through to the end. The results reported here are combined for the 84 responders. Firstly what are shown are the characteristics of the responders. This is followed by more in-depth detail regarding the survey questions.

## Ranked from the top, the ages of responders are:

Age Range	Number
56 – 60yrs	22
61 – 65yrs	21
51 - 55yrs	16
66 - 70yrs	14
71 – 75yrs	6
46 – 50yrs	2
81yrs or older	2
36 – 45yrs	1

The majority of responders, 54%, prefer to socialize with women of ‘all age ranges’, followed closely by a preference for the age range 46 – 75 yrs.

Of the total responders 83 identified as female and one as male although this could be an error - because the survey data has been combined, the impact of any one particular respondent is negligible.

In retrospect, it would have been useful to know how many women identified as single or in a relationship. It was an oversight that this was not asked.

## Employment, study, volunteering, retired

Work full time	33%
Retired	33%
Work part time, volunteer, study, unwaged	33%

And in relation to whether one’s level of income affects the choice of socializing or not, the majority answered *No* or *Sometimes*.

## Women mostly live in Sydney

Sydney Inner City	36
Sydney South East	6
Sydney South West	6
NSW other	6
Australia other area	6
Illawarra	5
Sydney North	4
Sydney South	4
Central Coast	4

## Finding out about Ten Forty

The majority of women (42) found out about Ten Forty through their friends, with smaller numbers hearing about it from LOTL, the olderdykes website, an event/conference,

and, other (feminist movement, women’s movement, don’t recall)

The remainder of the results are women’s responses to questions about their experiences from having attended Ten Forty activities in the past, and what they would like for the future.

## Attendance rates at Ten Forty activities

Bi-monthly dinner/discussion Summerhill/Haberfield	45
Dykes for Dinner	39
End of year party	33
Picnics	27
Haven’t attended anything	13
Other (Opera house July dance, Mardi gras participant, olderdykes on bicycles, art exhibitions, bowls	7

Regarding the frequency rates for attending Ten Forty Activities, Dykes for Dinner was marginally the most attended event for three times a year or more followed by Dinner/discussion at Haberfield three times a year or more.

## Ten Forty dinner/discussions at Summerhill/Haberfield enjoyed the most

Dinner and discussions various topics	28
Dinner and guest speaker	24
Dinner and games	15
Dinner dance	12
Expansion of the above ideas	Other

### Reasons for attending dinner/discussions at Summerhill/Haberfield

Socialize with other lesbians	49
Mental stimulation and discussion of ideas	46
To make new friends	26
To keep in touch with current friends	22
Look for a potential partner	10
Feminist connection, networking, learn about 1970s feminism	Other

Even though the majority (39) of the women responding were happy to attend the Ten Forty dinner discussions at Haberfield alone, there were a large percentage of women who are not happy to attend alone (19).

### Reasons for not attending

Prefer to know someone who is going	19 (26.8%)
Do not like attending alone	8 (11.3%)
Other reasons (transportation issues; too far, need o/night accommodation, safety)	7
Want to interact more with others, feel shy, needs managing to stop others dominating.	5
Topics not interesting, stuck in 1980s, want diversity	5
Too tired, studying, ill health	4
Haven't got around to it, live too far away	8
Dates clash with other events	24
My needs have changed over time	7
Getting older and prefer to stay home	5
Another group don't want to attend alone	6
It's hard to meet new people at this	5
I don't feel welcomed	3
I don't want to socialize with some people who go	3
I prefer to go to other Ten Forty events	3
My ex partner goes and that's difficult	1
Most of the women who go are not in my age range	1
I don't want to bring a plate of food	2

And this result is connected to what may make it easier to attend.

### Suggestions given to make it easier to attend

It would be easier to feel welcomed if other people who wanted to be friendly could be identified by a coloured name badge	9
Manage things to stop dominant types and make it more interactive	5
Have stimulating topics, dynamic women and activities	4
Have daytime events	1
Organize someone to travel with, make it more friendly	2
Arrange overnight accommodation	1

Overwhelmingly, (62.3%) of responders wanted the functions to remain lesbian only. The 'other' comments offered engaged around the difficulties with setting a rule regarding this.

Whether to focus Ten Forty events to a particular age group or continue as it is resulted in the majority (67.6%) wanting things to remain as they are followed by another 26.5% of women wanting women less than 40 yrs encouraged. The 'other' answers offered to this, expressed how having a lower age limit of 40yrs discriminated against those women who had partners that were younger than 40yrs because they were therefore unable to attend.

### What women would like in the future

Dinner discussion on a prearranged topic	48 (71%)
Dinner plus talk or demonstration	41
Dinner plus film	4
Dinner plus DIY/Travel/Dance/Cabaret	31
Event only – no dinner	18
Other responses: hire a bus for special event, trivia night, ballroom/salsa, bridge/scrabble, intergenerational meeting.	14

Changes women would like to see at Ten Forty dinner/discussions

Planning for interaction between women, making it more friendly, have interesting topics including a multicultural focus, daytime events, be politically active, or, have guest speakers	14 women answered this Q.
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### The range of women's interests from a list provided

Cultural/political issues	52
Lesbian feminist politics	47
Health and ageing	37
Book groups	30
Technology	28
Retirement planning and advice	26
Craft	13
Cooking	10
Other ideas; golf, wine tasting, theatre, film, picnics, walks, brain health, networking, interacting, theatre production, and, spirituality.	1 each

### Can you help arrange an event?

Could with the help of others	14
Maybe with the help of others	14
Could arrange something by myself	4
Couldn't help	38

Of these women who can help to arrange an event, only one woman has followed up with an email offering to organize anything.

The survey then sought information in regard to the use of the [olderdykes.org](http://olderdykes.org) website. The majority of women, who got to this point in the survey, do visit the website (37), and the remainder who answered, don't (24).

On the whole, women visited the website to find out

- what's on (35)
- read articles (25)
- download the newsletter (22)
- find links to other sites (23)

Some women offered suggestions such as having an email notification if something new was posted onto the site or having an email prompt to remind women to go to the site.

### What would you like the site to provide that isn't there

There was a range of responses:

- wanting interaction with others
- setting up a visitor group

- stories
- political lobbying
- more LGBTI resources

Most women accessed their Contact emails daily, and when asked about whether having a presence on social media such as Twitter, Facebook or Google+, the majority of women said No or Don't Know, with (11) women wanting this to happen.

In summary, there are several ideas presented here that offer scope for changes to be made to the Ten Forty dinner/discussions. Suggestions include that the Ten Forty dinner/discussions at Haberfield need to be managed so that a few don't dominate. Also, it is not enough to provide more enriching content and format; it is also important to find ways to make the night more inclusive, more open and friendly, and provide opportunities for better interaction between all of the women who attend, not just a few.

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## Sex and aged care

Kellie Shields, the LGBTI Project Officer from UnitingCare, was the guest speaker at our dinner and discussion evening on the 24 March. UnitingCare is the largest provider of aged care in NSW and the ACT and has recently set up a project to research the specific needs of the LGBTI community in aged care.

Our topic was 'Sex and Aged Care'. Our discussion leader Bronwyn did a great job of ensuring that everyone who wanted to could put their questions to Kellie, who has 27 years of experience in the aged care industry.

There are two main LGBTI groups wanting to access aged care - the older members of the community who have experienced discrimination throughout their lives but

have never confronted it, and the gay and lesbian baby boomers who know what they want and are demanding recognition of their needs.

Until recently the assumption of heterosexuality in the aged care industry has made lesbians invisible. For example application forms have a space for husband or wife but none for same sex partner.



In the future the emphasis is likely to be less on residential care and more on care in the home. At present the split is approximately 40% community based care and 60% residential care. The aim of the government is to reverse this figure. Home care is cheaper and most of the population would prefer to stay in their home if at all possible.

A key issue that we discussed is whether home based care will be adequate or have to be supplemented by partners, friends and relatives. Will these people be paid and supported as carers or will the aged care sector be relying on their unpaid labour to fill in the gaps? What happens to those who are single and don't have family support?

The question of the high cost of residential care also came up. What does it mean if you don't have the money? One solution is to move out of Sydney into a country town where services are cheaper and there are more vacancies. But this has the downside of no longer having a support network and friends close by.

Kellie emphasised the importance of making advanced care directives and discussing your wishes with those you have chosen to make medical decisions for you. As part of a larger project led by Professor Colleen Cartwright, ASLaRC Aged Services Unit of Southern Cross University have produced a booklet called *A Guide to Advance End-of-Life Care Planning For Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender & Intersex People* available from [www.scu.edu.au/aslarc/index.php/8/](http://www.scu.edu.au/aslarc/index.php/8/)

Kellie talked about the need to train aged care workers to be responsive and sensitive to the needs of lesbians. She wants to develop a training module and is eager to canvas our views and opinions. If you would like to give her your input her contact details are:

**T** 02 6624 63333

**M** 0410 619 103

**E** [kellie@caroona.org.au](mailto:kellie@caroona.org.au)

## About Ten Forty Matrix

Ten Forty Matrix is an informal group of lesbians over forty, many of whom have been socially and politically active in Sydney since 1987.

We enjoy discussion and debate 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.

Ten years ago we established the website [www.olderdykes.org](http://www.olderdykes.org) to encourage national and international connections between older lesbians.

Ten Forty Matrix is not an organisation you have to join, but if you want to receive regular information about our activities and our 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](http://www.olderdykes.org)

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## Who currently does what?

Bookings, liaison, and general contact: Jan

Utilities box: Sylvia and Wendy

Money Management: Esther

Website management: Jan, Ruth, Dorothy, Diann, Helen

Newsletter: editing and layout Ruth and Dorothy

If you would like to become involved in any of the above, or have some ideas about social events and/or topics for our bi-monthly dinner and discussion evenings, please contact Jan on 9810 5130 or email [contact@olderdykes.org](mailto:contact@olderdykes.org)