

Newsletter

July 2008
www.olderdykes.org



Ten Forty Dinner and Discussion

6pm - 10 pm

Saturday 2 August

Website launch and games night

Launch of the revamped, revitalised and re-imagined website:

www.olderdykes.org

Followed by games, games and more games.

Summer Hill Community Centre.

BYO food to share & your own drinks.

Entry fee for the bi-monthly dinner and discussion is \$15 fully waged, \$10 part waged and \$5 concession.

Summer Hill Community Centre is at 131 Smith Street, Summer Hill, near Lackey Street, which leads from the station.

There is parking near the Centre and the station.

By train, the Community Centre is on the right hand side of the station, going towards the City.

By bus, from George Street, City catch the 413 bus to Junction Road, Summer Hill or the 483 to the junction of Liverpool Road and Carlton Crescent, Summer Hill.

What's on

Dykes for Dinner

Thursday August 14 2008

6.30pm

Hotel Saravana Bhavan

15 The Strand Croydon

BYO only. Corkage \$1 pp

Please RSVP by Sunday 10 August to contact@olderdykes.org

Thursday 11 September 2008

6.30pm

Roxanne's (modern Australian)

39 Glebe Point Road Glebe (park in Broadway Shopping Centre)

Entrees \$8 - \$12, Mains \$17 - \$26

Vegetarian options available

BYO and Licensed

Please RSVP by Sun 7 September to contact@olderdykes.org

RTA Spring ride

Sunday 19 October

The ride is 50km over the Harbour Bridge to Olympic Park.

Women in the Bush will put in a team so if you would like to ride with a good bunch of women, email contact@olderdykes.org.

The Women's Library Book Club

July 27th 2008 - *Fasting, Feasting* by Anita Desai (1999)

Fourth Sunday of the month
4 to 5.30pm

The Women's Library

8-10 Brown Street Newtown

All women welcome

Email contact@olderdykes.org for further information.

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.

Five years ago we established the website 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, you need to take out a newsletter subscription.

Newsletter subscription

The annual subscription for our bi-monthly newsletter is \$10 waged and \$5 unwaged.

Subscriptions can be paid at Ten Forty Dinner and Discussion evenings or by cheque to Ten Forty Matrix, 29 Florence Street, St Peters 2044.

To receive an emailed newsletter, please email contact@olderdykes.org.

To receive a hard copy please telephone Esther on 9516 3504.



Notes from June 2008 Ten Forty meeting

At the June Dinner and Discussion evening, women joined one of three discussion groups on offer: lesbians and retirement facilitated by Helen, mental health services for lesbians facilitated by Abigail, and lesbians and changes to human rights legislation facilitated by Spider.

In the retirement group, the issues were mostly around:

- finances - how can we change our lifestyle to suit our new financial situation, the importance of thinking early about how to build retirement finances, superannuation
- housing options

- identity – how to develop a new identity once we are no longer in the paid workforce
- frailty/ill health – what do we do when we can no longer look after ourselves.

In the mental health group, discussion covered the following topics:

- all women in the discussion group had experienced the mental health system in some way
- there were no lesbian specific or lesbian friendly services,

except a meagre service for Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

- homosexuality is still seen by some professionals as a mental illness
- you can get discriminated against by mental health practitioners if you declare your sexuality - you can talk about your illness OR your sexuality, but not both
- there is some phobia within the lesbian community towards women with mental health issues.

Advertising in this newsletter

Suggested policy re advertising in the Ten Forty Matrix newsletter:
Small businesses to be charged \$10 for an advertisement.

Requests to advertise should be emailed to contact@olderdykes.org. If the advertisement is accepted the advertiser will send a cheque or Money Order to Esther, our bookkeeper, who will then let the newsletter team know that the money has been paid and the advertisement will appear in the next newsletter. The same policy would apply to advertising through the contact email list.

Thanks to the wonderful sisters

Recently my partner Anne and I went on a Weeding Tour to Lord Howe Island with eight of our sisters from 10/40 and other friends.

The island is lovely and the Weeding Tour is really terrific. We were having a great time when Anne, while snorkelling, had a stress related heart attack. We were lucky that on our boat was Robbie, a very experienced nurse, who did all the preliminary first aid. To cut a long story short, we had a lightning trip to the wharf and ambulance and then to the little hospital where Anne had very expert care from

the local doctor and nurse. In the early morning we were flown back by air ambulance to Prince of Wales Hospital. After masses of tests and treatment she is well on the mend and may not have any lasting problems.

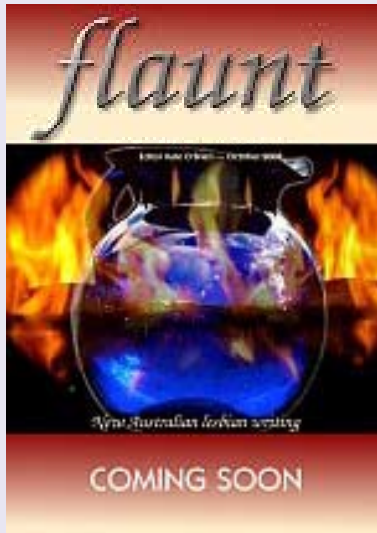
The whole thing was of course traumatic, but it was quite wonderful to have the support of the sisters and I would like to thank them publicly: Rob P, Meredith, Janne, Daniela, Glenys, Lola and Anne. Because we left the island precipitately we had no time to sort out bills, or pack etc. The gals moved in and paid the bills, packed up our chaotic room, contacted people, and much more. And Meredith came to the hospital at 5am with a packet of ginger nuts to have a cup of tea with

me – much appreciated after a heavy night. So thanks one and all – you were champions.

Lessons learned:

1. Stay fit and don't overdo it.
2. If away – even bushwalking – carry ID and emergency health and contact details. Anne was very lucky to have a good support system with her.
3. Heart attack – women don't always have clear heart attack symptoms – Anne had no chest pain. But chest pain is the trigger that gets you rapid medical attention. If you have any suspicion you are having a heart attack, shout 'chest pain' – you may get faster, better attention.

Jan



Call for submissions

Lesbian-ebooks, an initiative of gay-ebooks, is a dynamic new website that will publish and promote exciting, quality work from lesbian writers. We are inviting submissions from poets, writers of short fiction and playwrights for

our first collection of work, *flaunt*, Australia's first lesbian anthology for years.

Here is the chance to flaunt your talent and skills to a potentially world-wide readership. Publish those pieces that are currently burning up your hard drive, desperate to get out into the world.

There's no money, only glory at this stage, but we're working on that! We want *flaunt* to be the first of many such e-ditions. On-line publishing ... it's the way to go! Please limit your submissions to 3,000 words, and send it to the editor by 14 September 2008.

Scheduled release: mid October 2008.

More details www.lesbian-ebooks.com.au

Seniors in Focus @ Your Library

Jan, representing Ten Forty Matrix and www.olderdykes.org, gave a talk in May to 100 librarians involved in the home book-lending scheme.

Below are some of the points and issues she raised with them:

- The invisibility of lesbians and gays living in a nursing home, hostel or retirement village, where 'coming out' may be difficult.
- The lack of information about, and access to, lesbian and gay resources.
- The difficulty of dealing with library staff whose attitudes are not known and may be negative.

Library policy:

- How does lesbian/gay literature make it into the library and how does this extend to other media – CDs, videos and DVDs?
- What about magazines: does the library have copies of LOTL and Sydney Star Observer available?
- Does the library have a lesbian/gay reading list?
- Internet access is rapidly becoming important – can you assist clients' access to it?

If the answer is no to all or most of these questions, what is the reason for this?

The response to Jan's talk was very positive, with many librarians saying they had never considered many of the issues she had raised.



Brunch and politics with WEL NSW

10am to 1pm

Sunday 3 August 2008

WEL office, 66 Albion Street, Surry Hills (just up the road from Central Station)

There are many changes, enquiries and submissions happening in the Federal arena; paid maternity leave, pay equity, violence against women amongst others. At a State level, there has been funding given for another round of pilot projects and other projects are disappearing.

What are your thoughts on the changes? What do you think should have priority? Do you

want to know what others are doing and how you can be active in promoting issues which sorely need your help.

Open to all, WEL member or not. Come along and meet, or be re-acquainted with, the very active Women's Electoral Lobby NSW. Learn what we are doing and what else needs to be done.



No previous experience required (though this is very welcome), but do need enthusiasm, willingness and some time to spend on issues.

Bring a plate to share and come along for a fun and very political morning.

Call us on 02 9212 4374 or email welnsw@comcen.com.au to let us know you are coming.

Talking Heads at the Toxteth (THAT!)

6 for 6.30

Thursday 24 July, 2008

Toxteth Hotel, 345 Glebe Point Road, Glebe (near Wigram Road)

Dykes, poofers and law reforms (will these law reforms lead to the decay of society as we know it?)

Lesbian and gay speakers are:

David Bernie Vice-President, NSW Council for Civil Liberties

Emily Gray co-convenor Gay & Lesbian Rights Lobby

Penny Sharpe MLC Parliamentary Secretary for Mining & Energy

Michael Vaughan co-convenor Rainbow Labor

Join us for dinner after for a buy one get one free meal deal on the private heated balcony (weather permitting) or in the forum venue - both upstairs. Restaurant-style seating at tables of 10 (bookings not taken for sessions but see below re: dinner) - upstairs Bar open during sessions. Dinner reservations essential.

Donation: \$10/\$5 conc. Seniors discount available at Bar

Convenors: Kate Barton, Alexandra Penfold, Helen Randerson

Inquiries: katebarton3@optusnet.com.au or phone 9518.5560

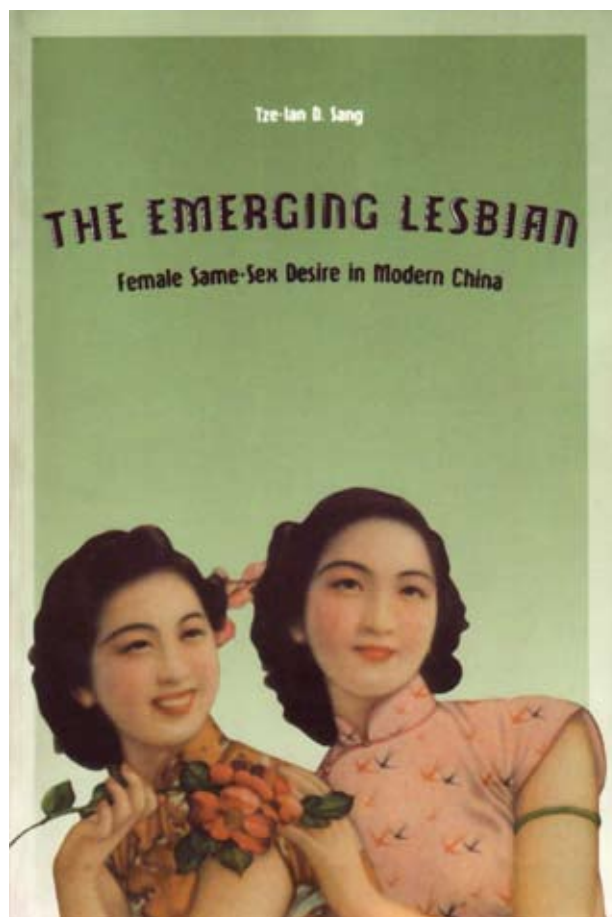
Lesbians in China

In the past decade, a large amount of scholarly works on feminism and the women's movement have touched upon issues of homoeroticism and lesbianism in China.

Tze-lan D. Sang's *The Emerging Lesbian: Female Same-Sex Desire in Modern China* is the first full-length English work devoted to the studies of Chinese lesbianism.

What distinguishes her book from other literary studies on Chinese homosexuality is that Sang not only discusses the representation of female-female relationship in literary works, but also connects it with emerging lesbian activism in Taiwan and mainland China.

Under the Mao regime, Sang suggests, homosexuality was silenced by the legal discourse and practice of heterosexual



monogamy. After the Mao era, as China has re-opened up to the West, Chinese society has gone through a new wave of re-sexualisation of the individual body; and the lesbian community has begun to become visible in the public sphere.

The above is taken from a review published in *Intersections: Gender, History and Culture in the Asian Context* – intersections.anu.edu.au/

Making a difference through learning

The Sydney Mechanics School of Arts is a vibrant community of people making a vital contribution to the social, artistic and cultural life of Sydney. Its Centre for Social Change offers a dynamic program of conversations, debates and seminars,

and supports a wide range of other organisations with a focus on creating positive change in society. It is also the oldest lending library in Australia.

12:30 pm - 1:30 pm
Wednesday 27 August

Geek Girls & Women

How do structural and social factors and cultural stereotypes

affect the career progress and choices of women scientists?

Speaker: Dr Claire Hooker, author of *Irresistible Forces: Australian Women in Science*

SMSA - A Centre for Social Change

280 Pitt Street SYDNEY NSW 2000 phone 9262 7300

www.sydneymsa.com.au

Our website

There are growing numbers of older lesbians (in keeping with the demographic profile of the general population) scattered throughout metropolitan, regional and rural areas who find it difficult to locate others.

There are also many issues affecting the lives of older lesbians that are different to those of younger lesbians.

Until now, older Australian lesbians have had to rely on websites generated in the USA for information and contact with others.

We hope that our website www.olderdykes.org, which has been operating since 2001, inspires lesbians across Australia and the world to contribute ideas, stories and articles about what it's like being an older dyke in the 21st Century!



Four websisters hard at work on the new website design


www.olderdykes.org is managed by a group of Ten Forty Matrix volunteers with various levels of IT expertise. We call ourselves the Websisters.

In early 2007, Ten Forty Matrix agreed to fund the annual

expenditure associated with the website, including web server costs and volunteer skill development.

On 2 August we will launch a major re-design of the website.

We hope you use it and enjoy it.

A screenshot of the website olderdykes.org. The header features a purple logo and the text 'olderdykes.org'. Below the header is a navigation menu with links: 'Whats On', 'About Us', 'Connecting', 'Resources', 'Words Words Words', 'Web Gallery', and 'Site Map'. The main content area is divided into three columns. The left column has a 'Welcome' section with links to 'History of Ten Forty', 'Sydney Ten Forty', 'Matrix', 'History of our website', and 'Logo'. Below this is a 'Contributing' section with text about submitting stories and articles. The middle column has a large heading 'Welcome to olderdykes.org' followed by a paragraph about the organization, a paragraph about the site's growth, a paragraph about the multi-faceted resource, and a paragraph about news about events. The right column has a 'Just uploaded!' section with a link to download the newsletter, and an 'IWD' section with a photo of banners and the text 'The banners are up!'. The footer contains the copyright notice: '© copyright by olderdykes.org 2008 | design by ze websisters'.



Retiring Women enjoying lunch at El Pescadore, Petersham

Retiring Women Events

11am Thursday 31 July

Bike ride in Centennial Park
Contact Cheryl for meeting
place details

12 noon Thursday 28 August
(check for venue details)

7.30 pm Wednesday 8 October

Billy Budd opera (contact Cheryl
by 31st July to attend)

To RSVP, please email contact@olderdykes.org

Winter Bush Dance

8.00pm – 12.00

Friday 25 July

Marrickville Town Hall, 303 Mar-
rickville Road, Marrickville

A mixed Gay and Lesbian event.
\$25 / \$20 concession with
health card

Women in the Bush have a table
Licensed or BYO. Light refresh-
ments on the table or BYO.

Email contact@olderdykes.org
to book a place

International Feminist Conference

2 - 5 September 2008

Brisbane

The overall goal of the Confer-
ence is to provide a forum
to bring feminist thinkers
together, to share information
about violations against women
and children.

For more details go to
[www.brisfeministconfer-
ence08.org.au/](http://www.brisfeministconfer-
ence08.org.au/)

Reclaim the Night planning meetings

6.00pm for 6.30pm

Wednesday 23 July

Reclaim the Night is a rally and
festival against sexual violence.

We plan to meet every Wednes-
day at the Sydney Uni Women's
Room in the Manning Building.

Please call if you need direc-
tions.

This year RTN turns 30 in
Australia so we hope to have a
huge turn out. The 2008 march
will be held on 31 October.

All women are welcome to
attend.

Melissa de Silva 0434 99 22 15

Ten Forty Matrix: who currently does what?

Chief Entertainment Officer :
Helen

Bookings, liaison, and general
contact: Jan

Utilities box: Jan and Robyn

Money Management: Esther

Website and contact email list
management: Jan, Ruth, Doro-
thy, Diana, Kate, Robyn, Spider-
lily, Diann and Rosemary.

Newsletter: editing and layout
Ruth and Dorothy. Photocopy-
ing (rotates)

Mail-out: Esther

If you would like to become
involved in any of the above,
please email [contact@older-
dykes.org](mailto:contact@older-
dykes.org)

Lezlist - an email list for older lesbians

Just a reminder about our mod-
erated email list for older dykes.
To subscribe, please go to www.olderdykes.org/talkback/index.html

Through Lezlist, we hope to
encourage the sharing of infor-
mation and ideas and promote
the development of friendship
and community amongst older
dykes at a local and interna-
tional level.

Each month we have a new
topic for discussion.

This month the topic is:

Scroogism

Is there a cheaper way to do
what I want to do?