

Matrix Guild of Victoria Inc.

Newsletter - April 2015

The aims and objectives of Matrix are to:

- Promote appropriate care and support for older lesbians
- Provide some accommodation that caters to the needs of ageing lesbians who experience financial disadvantage
- Support ageing lesbians' accommodation choices
- Challenge ageism and oppose discrimination against older lesbians
- Advocate on behalf of older lesbians to governments and other relevant bodies
- Promote social contact and support among older lesbians
- Research lesbians' experience of aged care

Happy Easter Everyone,

I hope that you all enjoy the Easter break – and for all you chocoholics, be careful not to overdose on chocolate eggs!

As usual, our newsletter has information on lesbian resources that you might find useful, plus a personal account of the recent Olivia cruise. Settle back, and read on.....

Social support for older lesbians

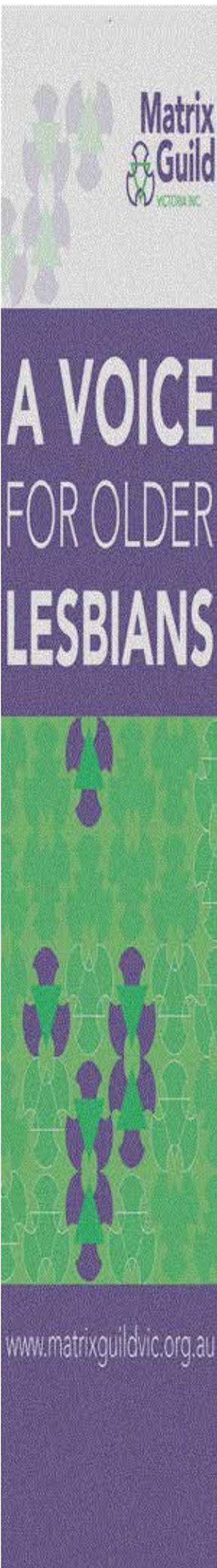
We now have a new brochure, hot off the presses, to publicise the Matrix Volunteer Visitor Program. Many older lesbians may have lost touch with their community, may not have internet access and may not read the mostly gay-male focussed queer publications.



Can you help us find them? Can you help us get the word out into the suburbs, rural and regional areas by taking a small bundle of brochures to display at your GP's practice and/or local Community Health Centre? If so, please contact Anna Cook: 0448 002 870 or www.matrixguildvic.org.au

Matrix Guild of Victoria has a free visiting service where lesbian volunteers meet with older, isolated lesbians in their homes or residences for a minimum of two hours per month. Visits might also include outings to cafés, shops and other social activities. The visitors are supported by a co-coordinator, and receive induction training, some reimbursement for travel costs and insurance cover.

Do you know of any older, isolated or disabled lesbians, aged over 40, living in the country or the city, who would like to be in contact with their community and who would like regular social contact with one of our trained lesbian volunteer visitors? Do you fit into this category yourself? Visits are free.





Please contact:

Anna Cook, Co-coordinator, MMVP

E: inquiries@matrixguildvic.org.au

W: www.matrixguildvic.org.au

T: 0448 002 870

Last Saturday we held our second training day for prospective Visitors. We'd like to thank our very experienced facilitator, Di O'Neil. It was an enjoyable and informative day. We now have several more Visitors ready to go!

Become a Volunteer Visitor

Metropolitan and country volunteers are urgently needed to service our growing demand.

- Do you have a spare couple of hours a month?
- Do you identify as lesbian or as a gay woman?
- Would you enjoy a rewarding exchange with an older lesbian?

For more information, please contact:

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**A VOICE
FOR OLDER
LESBIANS**

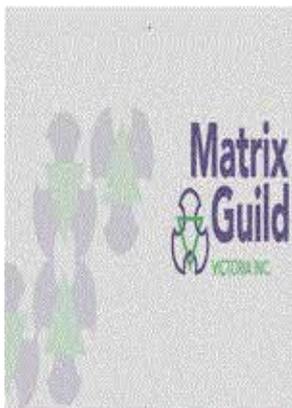
Wills, Powers of Attorney, Guardianships made easy!

Colleen WOOLLEY OAM JP
Member, RVAHJ
Tel: 03 9438 5137
Diamond Creek 3089

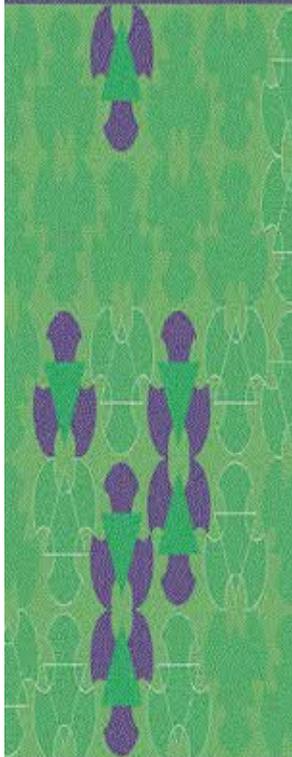
If you don't get me straight away or I don't contact you within a few hours, please ring the JP Registry on 1300 365 567, follow the prompts and you will be directed to another available JP in the area.

You've just been hit by a tram. Both arms and both legs are broken and you have a serious head injury. You've been put into an induced coma and it'll be months before you're in a position to look after yourself and your affairs.

Meanwhile, at home, important correspondence is arriving. Your bank is wondering why you've dropped behind in your mortgage payments. Your driver's licence must be renewed. Your credit cards are about to be cancelled. And so it goes. You get the general idea.



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All of this is “fixable”. And it will only take an hour or so of your time. And you can do it for free!

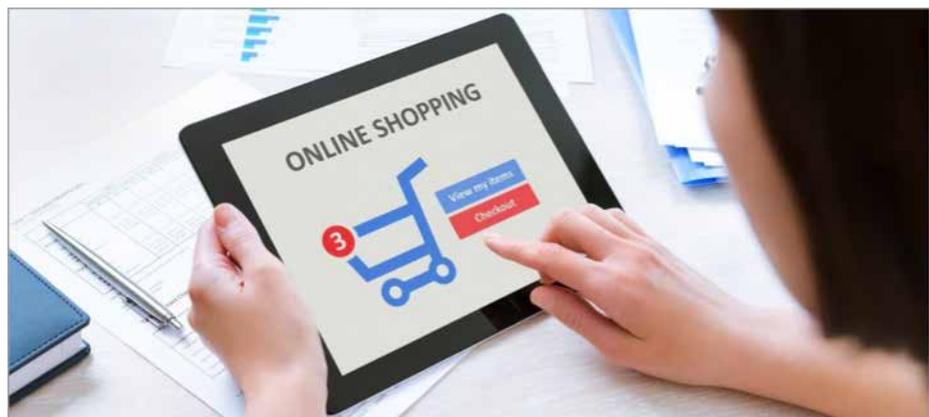
Introducing the Matrix Guild’s new service.

Matrix member Colleen Woolley has been a Justice of the Peace (JP) for 16 years and specialises in helping people organise their Enduring Powers of Attorney, Financial, Medical and Enduring Power of Guardianship .

She provides all the paperwork needed and is qualified to witness them for you. All you have to do is determine who will act for you. Obviously, this must be someone you trust implicitly as they will have control of all your affairs. Preferably, you will have two people to act for you, say, your partner (if you have one) and a second person just in case you and your partner were both crossing the road in front of that tram. Ideally, both those people would be available (and can also do their own Powers) at the same time as they will need to sign that they accept the responsibility.

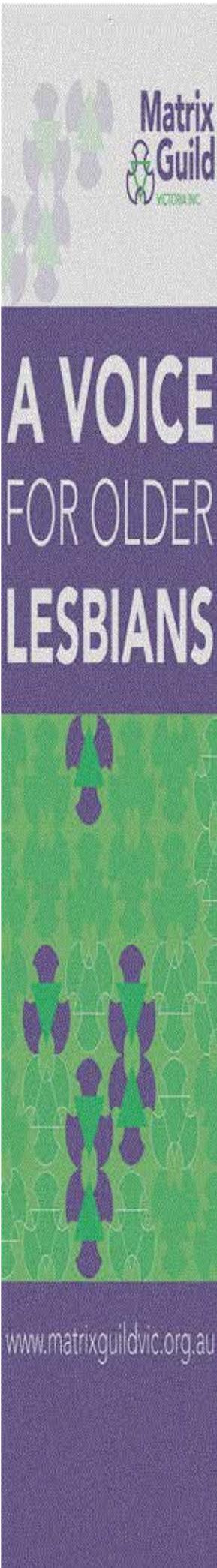
Colleen lives in Diamond Creek and you are welcome to go to her home office to complete the papers. If you are genuinely unable to make the trip, Colleen is happy to go to your home to help you complete the required forms. This service is available as of now. Just contact Colleen to make a mutually convenient time on 9438 5137 or email: colleenw48@bigpond.com

The Rainbow Initiative – Shop online to Donate to Matrix



If you ever shop online, please consider shopping via The Global Fundraising Initiative (<http://www.globalfundraisinginitiative.com>). Their new Rainbow Initiative enables consumers to create a free donation to the LGBTI charity of their choice by shopping with the participating retailers. It is the retailers who pay the Initiative a commission on each sale made. This will then be paid in full to Matrix if you select us as your preferred charity. We will send you a tax deductible receipt for the donation.

You can shop for clothes, shoes, flowers, sporting goods, office supplies, book hotels, credit cards, beauty products, insurance or even mobile phone accounts from



participating businesses including HSBC, Vodafone, Berlei, General Pants, Mossimo, Quiksilver, Cellarmasters, Clarks and Interflora to name but a few of the more than 100 retailers participating.

You pay the same price for a product whether shopping direct with the retailer or shopping via the Initiative. So why not do all your shopping via their website and help Matrix out at no cost to yourself?



These days we often hear of organisations having “The Rainbow Tick”, but what does it really mean? What does an organisation need to do to qualify for a “Rainbow Tick”? Here is the answer.

The Rainbow tick is a world first and was developed by Gay & Lesbian Health Victoria (GLHV) in consultation with Quality Innovation Performance (QIP).

It consists of six standards against which services can be evaluated to demonstrate LGBTI inclusive practice. Organisations receiving the Rainbow Tick may be listed in a national register of accredited services.

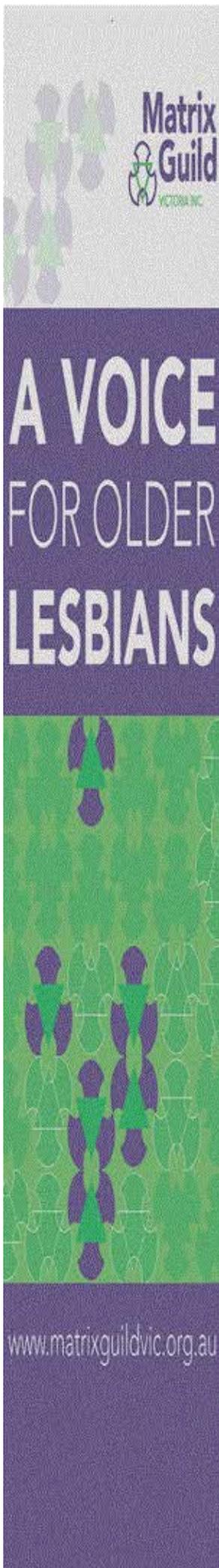
The six standards are:

- Organisational capability
- Consumer consultation
- GLBTI cultural safety
- Disclosure and documentation
- Professional development
- Access and intake

For more information about the standards and the Rainbow Tick, check out the GLHV website at <http://www.glhv.org.au/>

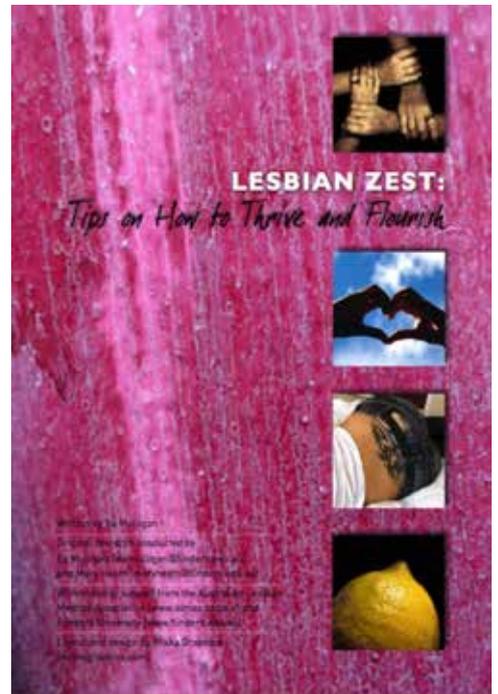
Organisations that are thinking about applying for accreditation should contact Barb Bell, Quality Liaison Officer, QIP, bbell@qip.com.au, 03 9459 7740.

Organisations wanting their staff to do LGBTI training or professional development should contact Sunil Patel, Training Manager, sunil.patel@latrobe.edu.au, 03 9479 8724

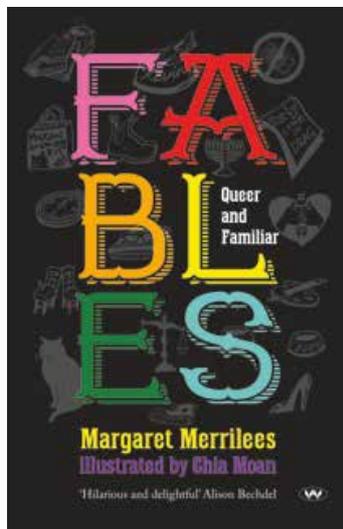


Ea Mulligan and Mary Heath have interviewed a number of lesbians to produce this uplifting piece called 'Lesbian Zest: Tips on How to Thrive and Flourish'. To put some Lesbian Zest in your life, read more about the participants' tips at http://www.qahc.org.au/sites/default/files/docs/Lez_res.pdf

- Treasure your friends
- Gain nourishment from your community
- Birds of a feather flock together
- Be adventurous
- There are many passionate pursuits and many sources of strength
- You need to believe in yourself and care for yourself
- Come out and don't let anyone put you down



Book Review: Fables Queer and Familiar



Adelaide lesbian writer, Mag Merrilees has just launched her new book in Adelaide, Sydney and Melbourne. It's a thoroughly enjoyable read and will have you laughing heartily. We've been reading the short chapters out to each other as bedtime stories.

"Fables Queer and Familiar is a wry, affectionate story of two lesbian grannies, their friends, family and community. Any ageing activist will recognise the combination of good intentions and aching joints. Anyone young will recognise how mystifying the adult world can be. [The book], which started life as the online serial Adelaide Days, is also broadcast by Radio Adelaide."

"Hilarious and delightful" Alison Bechdel

If you'd like to support a fellow feminist lesbian, buy her book at: Hares and Hyenas 63 Johnston St, Fitzroy or go to Mag's website: www.margaretmerrilees.com



Disability Aids register

Last year we published an article explaining the Disability Aids Register set up by Carole Ann & Rosemary Wealthy. In case you missed it, we have published a shortened version here to make sure all Matrix members are aware of this service.

“Many women in our community require disability aids from time to time and these can be quite expensive to hire or purchase. Consequently, Carole Ann & Rosemary Wealthy have set up a register of disability aids which can be borrowed free of charge from members of our women’s community. The intention of the scheme is simply to put women needing equipment in touch with those who are willing to lend it.

The register of names and contact details of women willing to lend equipment will be confidential, and will be kept with Carole and Rosemary. A woman needing a disability aid will contact Carole or Rosemary who will then contact the woman who has the aid and check that it is still available, and that she is happy for her contact details to be provided to the borrower. A list of the equipment available for loan will be distributed via our lesbian networks, and updated regularly.

No responsibility is accepted by Carole or Rosemary for the maintenance of the equipment. Lenders and borrowers need to negotiate between themselves the suitability of the equipment, and the conditions of the loan in each case. Equipment included in the register will be of a general nature not requiring individual fitting or assessment by a health professional.

Currently, we have the following aids on the register:-

- Fold-up wheelchairs
- Walkers
- Crutches
- Shower stool / chairs
- Toilet chairs
- Over-the-bed table



If you have a disability aid that you are not currently using and would be willing to lend to others, please contact Carole (E-mail: caroleann@vic.chariot.net.au Phone: 0437891981) or Rosemary (E-mail: r.wealthy@bigpond.com Phone: 0416268108).

Dykes on Bikes lead the way at the 2015 Mardi Gras in Sydney!

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Reports

Olivia Lesbian Cruise to NZ

Shoshi and I were fortunate enough to go on a 12 days Olivia cruise from Sydney to NZ in Feb. Yes, a cruise with almost 2000 other lesbians!

The highlight of the trip for me was going through the Fiordland National Park especially the magnificent Milford Sound. As I said to Jean Taylor afterwards only half jokingly "I can die happy now"!



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When I told a couple of straight friends about the cruise their first reaction was “it must have been wild”! Well the average age was 60+ so it probably wasn’t quite as wild as they imagined. But we sure had lots of fun. The nightly entertainment included well-known singers and comedians including Olivia Newton-John, Beccy Cole & Karen Williams. I must here mention my all time favourites the Top Twins who never fail to win the audience with their yodelling and “camp mother” humour. A very talented piano/violin female duo provided a selection of classical music pieces every evening.

When the ship docked at Windy Wellington the word must have gone out to the local lesbians that we were coming. A lesbian bar had a big notice about a welcome drinks afternoon in our honour. Shoshi and I were on the way to the Wellington Cable Car and must have looked lost when we were approached by a woman. Not in a million years would we have taken her to be a lesbian! But she was and she sure spotted us and proceeded to give us directions for the best way to get to the cable car.

The ship itself the Oosterdam was absolutely mind-blowing not just size wise but because there was so much attention given to every little detail when it was built. We had no idea it was going to be so luxurious and the service was amazing too.

Unfortunately we both caught the flu (we blame the American women on board!) and finished up spending the last 2 days in quarantine in our cabin. Not a bad place to be sick when you have room service at your back and call and friends bringing extra food/drink deliveries.



For more information on Olivia cruises have a look at this link: <http://www.olivia.com/>

Matrix needs you!

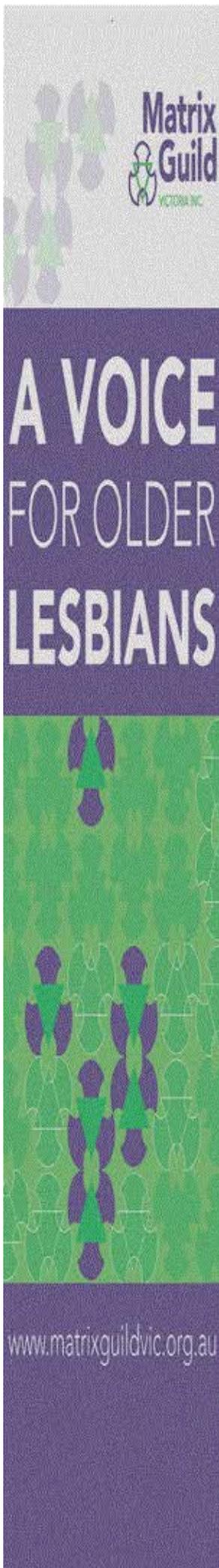
Social afternoons

Over the last few years, Matrix ran some monthly social afternoons which were sometimes just a cuppa, cakes, biscuits and chats and other times we had games days. We played cards, dominoes, mahjong. These wound down because the numbers attending decreased.

Lately, we've had some new lesbians join Matrix and they're asking for some sort of social interaction. We'd like to re-establish the games/social afternoons.



We need one or two volunteers to run these. We're happy to hire the venue (usually the small hall at Jika Jika Community Centre in Northcote) on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon. Would you have about 3 hours spare on a monthly (or even every second month), to run these. It's fairly low key and informal. You just need to unlock and lock up, move some wheeled trestle tables in to set up, fire up the urn and lay out the tea and coffee supplies. Then sit back, relax and welcome new women as they arrive.



New lesbian book release:

‘Journey Into My Underworld’ by Jo Alexander (aka Margo van der Voort).

An autobiography of a lesbian journey. Published by: Long Breast Press Incl. Melbourne.

Synopsis of the book:

‘The late 1960s and early 1970s were times of great societal and political change in Western Europe, but in particular in progressive Holland (The Netherlands).

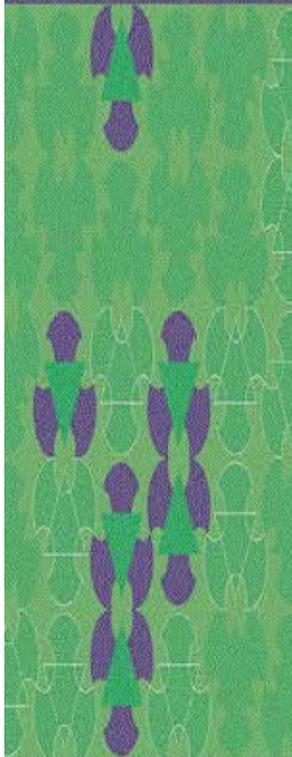
In this book, Jo takes you into her personal experiences of those times while the sexual, political and religious revolutions were raging around her.

Her journey into her sexual identity was not an easy one; lesbianism was invisible, homo- and lesbo-phobia was everywhere, and religious Roman Catholic repression was rigid and fearsome.

Courageously Jo describes her journey into sexual taboos, from the inside out, and



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about being a girl, compulsory heterosexuality, and the lesbian sexual experience. She describes her internalised fear, implanted by her Catholic upbringing, and the devastating effects of being judged and exiled. Jo also writes about joy and liberation and of her love for women in general. Claiming her lesbian identity was a peak experience in more ways than one.'

For info and book orders call Margo on 0407672757
\$30 per copy including postage in Victoria



The deadline for the April Newsletter is 27th April, 2015.

Please send news items and short articles to Rosemary at r.wealthy@bigpond.com

Anneke Deutsch Matrix Guild of Vic Inc. at secretary@matrixguildvic.org.au