



April 2014 Edition:

“The Matrix Flyer”

Hello Everyone,

Autumn is such a lovely time in Melbourne! Leaves turning red and gold, crisp mornings and warm days with that golden afternoon light.....I do hope that you are enjoying this delightful season “of mists and mellow fruitfulness”.

You will notice that the **Matrix Aims and Objectives** are the first item in this month’s newsletter. It is important that we all understand what Matrix is about, and how it is making a difference to the lives of older lesbians. We can all be very proud of what has been achieved, and of the work that Matrix members continue to do.

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

Matrix News



Free LGBTIQ Legal Services

Fitzroy Legal Service (FLS) are a community **legal** centre providing free legal help to Victorians, located at 124 Johnston Street, Fitzroy. They are offering **free services to the LGBTIQ** (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, inter-sex and queer) community.

In late 2012, FLS set up an **LGBTIQ Legal Advice Clinic** in response to community demand for specialist legal advice for legal problems affecting LGBTIQ communities. The Clinic runs **every Thursday evening** and lawyers can provide advice and referral for most legal matters, with specialist lawyers available to provide assistance in discrimination and family law matters.

To make an appointment to see a lawyer at the LGBTIQ Legal Advice Clinic, please call (03) 9419 3744 during business hours. For more information, click [here](#). Or go to http://www.fitzroy-legal.org.au/cb_pages/lgbtiq_legal_advice.php



How did you get through it?

If you haven't already arranged to be interviewed for this important project, please consider sharing your wisdom. The researchers are offering a free double pass to the movies as a thank you for participating. If you've already been interviewed and didn't get your movie tickets, just get in touch with Caz (Caroline) Whyte. (Her details below). Please pass this request on to any other lesbians you know who are 65 or older.

Most of us, at some time in our lives, have been depressed or anxious. It's difficult not to, given the lesbophobia and discrimination we have all lived through. Many of us tried to avoid this by being closeting all or some of the time, but living in hiding has its own stresses. Lesbian researchers, Catherine Barrett and Caz Whyte are currently seeking older LGBTI Australians to participate in confidential interviews. The interviews are part of a project to educate service providers about the issues associated with depression and anxiety for older LGBTI people. The project is a collaboration between The National Ageing Research Institute, Val's Café (at the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health and Society, La Trobe University) and RMIT and has been funded by *beyondblue*. The project has been approved by La Trobe University's ethics committee. Anneke from Matrix is part of this project's advisory board.

We would like to speak with lesbians aged 65 years or more, from any state/territory who have experienced depression and/or anxiety – about their strategies for managing. Hearing about the ways in which you got through could be invaluable for others. Interviews will be conducted until June 2014.

For more information or to book an interview contact:

Dr Catherine Barrett, Val's Café
P: 03 9479 8702 5297 or
E: c.barrett@latrobe.edu.au

Carolyn Whyte, Val's Café
P: 03 94798739 or
E: c.whyte@latrobe.edu.au

Gatherings and Social Events

Lesbian Games Days

On the second Saturday of the month



The next Games Day will be held on **Saturday 12th April**. Bring your favourite games such as scrabble, cards, mah-jong, or chess. Women are always welcome to just come for a “cuppa and company”. A gold coin donation helps fund the tea, coffee and biscuit supplies. If you don't have transport, let us know and we might be able to put you in touch with someone coming from your area.

When: 1.30 – 3:30pm

Venue: Jika Jika Community Centre. Cnr Plant and Union Sts. Northcote.
(Mel. Map 30, F11)

How to get there: Tram - No. 86 Stop No. 27. Bus – No. 506. Train - Westgarth Train Station.

Contacts: Ardy Tibby: 9387 6610 or Margo van der Voort: 0407 672 757

Support the Comedians Who Supported Us

The **Melbourne International Comedy Festival (MICF)** is about to kick off (27th March - 20th April). Many of the performers who donated their time for the **Lesbian Comedy Gala** have their own shows coming up as part of MICF. If you enjoyed them at Northcote Town Hall, then book a couple of tickets and take your girl or bring a mate.



Monica Dullard: 'Public Libraries are SHHH...HOT'

<http://www.comedyfestival.com.au/2014/season/shows/public-libraries-are-shhh-hot-monica-dullard> <http://www.trybookings.com>

Hannah Gadsby:

"The Exhibitionist" <http://www.comedyfestival.com.au/2014/season/shows/the-exhibitionist-hannah-gadsby>

Celia Pacquola:

"Let Me Know How It All Works"
Out' <http://www.comedyfestival.com.au/2014/season/shows/let-me-know-how-it-all-works-out-celia-pacquola>

Cal Wilson:

'It Could Have Been Me' <http://www.comedyfestival.com.au/2014/season/shows/it-could-have-been-me-cal-wilson>

Catherine Deveny:

'The Troll-hunter' <http://www.comedyfestival.com.au/2014/season/shows/the-trollhunter-catherine-deveny>

Geraldine Quinn:

'MDMA: Modern Day Maiden Aunt'
<http://www.comedyfestival.com.au/2014/season/shows/mdma-modern-day-maiden-aunt-geraldine-quinn> Or if you liked her songs you can buy them at: www.geraldinequinn.com

Ukulele Ladies:

Melbourne Ukulele Festival 7th March <http://www.northcotetownhall.com.au>

ALSO: Clare Bartholomew, Nicci Wilkes, Geraldine Hickey and Cath Jamison



The Satin and Silk Ball 2014

Tickets on sale now.

The Matrix Guild Of Victoria Inc. proudly presents **"The Satin & Silk Ball 2014"**. Featuring the awesome talent of **WENDY STAPLETON** performing as Doris Day with a splash of Dusty. DJ Trish will be playing your favourites and if you have any special requests please email Sharon @ matrixevents@matrixguildvic.org.au and we will ensure that your request is played on throughout the evening.

If you are looking for a wonderful night out, great ambience, wonderful company, friendly environment and fabulous entertainment this annual event is a must for your calendar. We look forward to seeing you and your friends joining The Matrix Guild to assist to raise funds for Older Lesbians throughout Victoria.

When: Saturday, 17th May 2014

Time: 7.00 pm – 12.30 am

Where: St. Kilda Town Hall, 99A Carlisle Street, St. Kilda

BYO Food and Drinks

Tea, Coffee and light snacks available

Lucky seat prizes

Contacts: Anna Cook 0448 002 870 or
inquiries@matrixguildvic.org.au
Sharon Stanton 0419 99 966 or
matrixevents@matrixguildvic.org.au

An Open Invitation

This is an open invitation for all lesbians who would care to help celebrate

Jean Taylor's 70th birthday

On Saturday 26 April 2014, 5 pm - 10pm

At Jika Jika Community Centre

On the corner of Plant and Union Streets in Northcote

(Melway's map 30 F10; tram 86 along High Street, bus 506, Westgarth train station)

Please bring dinner food and beverages to share; sweets will be provided

This will be a story telling evening, so bring stories to tell, sing or enact

For a fun, laughter-filled lesbian party (absolutely NO presents)

Looking forward to seeing you there. This is a lesbian event for womyn only

A Personal Note from Pat



Hi, I'm Pat Mitchell - Matrix Treasurer.

This is a personal note from me to everyone reading this. If you are in your '40s or older this is highly relevant to you.

I started going deaf at 18 months, due to a severe bout of measles, which damaged my hearing nerves and they have been in decline ever since. So much so that I have just been fitted with a 'bionic ear'. I'll probably need to get a second one fitted in a couple of years.

What most people don't realise is that our hearing starts to deteriorate from our '40s on, particularly if you were ever exposed to persistent loud noise. For example: live music; industrial areas; work or

recreation environments, can cause significant hearing loss over time. I despair that so many young people listen to music via headphones at such a level that the sound can be heard outside of them. Think of trams, trains etc. This sound level causes permanent damage to the hearing nerves - they die, that's it. Once these neurological pathways are gone, there is no getting them back - EVER. The brain cells simply die from lack of stimulation.

What follows are excerpts from the 'Hearing Loss and Hearing Resources Guide' which I helped produce for Cicada Australia Inc.

Only a small proportion of those who need or would benefit from a hearing solution actually have one or have even tried one.

The barriers and perceptions are many:

- Lack of Awareness
- Denial
- Unrecognised Impacts of Hearing Loss
- Misbeliefs and Unrecognised Value of Solutions
- Poor Medical Guidance, Commercial/Vested Interests
- Stigma and Public Attitudes
- Cosmetics
- Cost
- Inadequate Information
- Fragmented Support Groups

Lack of Awareness:

Many people are still unaware or apathetic about damage to hearing through exposure to excessive or prolonged noise or that the damage is cumulative and permanent.

Many people are not aware they have a hearing loss, even when it is more than a mild loss, especially when the onset is gradual and the person and their family/friends adapt to it often without realising they are adapting.

Indifference to noise exposure and apathy are applicable to lots of people, with or without a hearing loss:

Do YOU find it hard to....?

- Follow conversations?
- Understand family & friends?
- Notice soft sounds?
- Separate voices from background noise?
- Hear on the phone/mobile?

If you said yes to any of these questions, it may mean there is some hearing impairment. The most common reason for people getting their first hearing aid is that their 'hearing got worse' and they are experiencing increasing communication problems and embarrassments.

At the other extreme, people have been motivated to seek a hearing solution after losing contracts or jobs due to misunderstandings. It is important to identify hearing loss earlier and not delay a solution.

You can read the rest of this booklet by going to this link: [Hearing Loss & Hearing Resources Guide](#).

Denial:

Facing up to a loss of ability in an area of our lives can be difficult, and hearing loss is no exception.

Among the justifications:

“I don’t have a problem” (though it is obvious to others),

“My hearing loss not severe enough”,

“My loss too mild”,

“I hear well in most situations”,

“My hearing loss is not disruptive to my life”,

“Hearing aids are a hassle”,

“Other people mumble”.

There are many reasons why people won’t deal with fading hearing. Some people, struggling to admit there is a problem, may not want to confront their advancing age, or are afraid of how they will manage or afford a hearing aid. Some genuinely don’t realise there is an issue as their hearing is fading so gradually they haven’t noticed it. In fact, in most cases it is someone else who notices the hearing loss, not the person with the impairment.

In the next newsletter, I will write about how my experience of sound has changed since I was fitted with the speech processor part of the implant.

May Newsletter

The deadline for the next Newsletter is 28th April. Please send news items and short articles to Rosemary at r.wealthy@bigpond.com

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