

Matrix Guild of Victoria Inc.

Newsletter - December 2016

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

Hello Everyone!

Happy holiday season, Solistice, Hannukah, Merry Christmas..... This is the last newsletter until February and the last one you'll get if you haven't renewed your Matrix membership. Hope you enjoy this bumper issue! Summer will soon be upon us and our thoughts turn to getting away for a break. This is the final newsletter for the year and advance notice that we will **not be publishing a newsletter for January 2017.**

Memberships are now overdue. We value your support and would appreciate it if you could take 5 minutes to renew today. Please make sure you logon to our membership page **NOW** and renew:

<http://matrixguildvic.org.au/membership.htm>

or complete the attached renewal form. Only financial members get discounted entry to Matrix events, receive this monthly newsletter, and are eligible to be on our housing waiting list. We need you to renew your membership to maintain our strength as the only lobby group for old lesbians. The greater our numbers, the more likely we are to have the ear of decision-makers in the government.

Invite to next committee meeting

The next committee meeting will be held on 7th December at:

Women's Health in the North (WHIN)

680 High St, Thornbury VIC 3071

Start at 11:30am for the presentation detailed below:

PHYSIOTHERAPY STUDENTS PRESENTATION

On Oct 28th Pat Mitchell and Chris Sitka attended the presentation at Melbourne University of the project that the four physiotherapy students did with Matrix. They have created an educational video for distribution to students in the health professions in which they encourage respect and counter discrimination against





lesbians (and other LGBTI people). The star of the video is our own committee member Pat Mitchell!



The student team consisting of three young lesbians and one heterosexual woman (Annabelle, Anne, Alysha and Rebecca) have done a superlative job and created a far reaching resource. Through their hard work in networking with 'the authorities' their work will be also taken up by the whole Health Department of Melbourne University and distributed wider to social worker networks and other universities. After their session they were also approached and encouraged to take it to an international conference and distributed it to other South East Asian countries with translation.

I would encourage members to attend to show our appreciation for what we have all achieved.

This is a remarkable achievement of advancing education of health professionals towards ending discrimination against older lesbians and is probably one of the most beneficial partnerships Matrix has entered into with any other group. It promises to have far reaching positive consequences.

The actual video can be seen on the **Matrix website** or at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HNaANAAs_ns

Robyn's Story

I'd like to thank Matrix for their outstanding Volunteer Visitors Program. When I moved into a Retirement Village out of my familiar area, in many respects I was at risk of experiencing social isolation. My dear friend Sara suggested this program for me, and I cannot thank her enough.

The benefits have been amazing. My visits with Heather are relaxed, friendly and social in nature. Since I don't drive, we chat, go out, walk around, have a meal and a coffee together, visiting places I could never get to on my own.

We share so many common interests - a love of animals and nature, an interest in the sciences, and ways of maintaining a healthy lifestyle while living with chronic illnesses. We share really good times together. This has a ripple effect, making a big improvement to my health and well-being.

As we age, many of us can find ourselves alone and without family support. We're not going to be 35 forever! Losing body strength and confidence can be incapacitating. All of this can add to our vulnerability. This program has expanded my world. I feel so grateful to Sara, who has worked so closely with the lesbian feminist community - and



particularly with Matrix - for making this suggestion. An especial note of thanks is also due to my visitor Heather. Her visits really brighten my life!

Robyn

If you'd like a visitor, or you think you'd like to be a Visitor, please call Anna on 0448 002 870 or email her at inquiries@matrixguildvic.org.au

Fundraising date

Vera has offered to be at Degani's to meet with anyone who wanted to brainstorm/ contribute/ commit share ideas re fundraising for Matrix - she will be there from 12 noon to around 1 pm. Anyone interested to attend above and has any ideas/ contributions, drop her a line. Contact Vera on: veraray1012@gmail.com

When: 12 December 2016

Where: Degani Bakery Cafe, 106 Station Street, Fairfield.

New Housing Scheme

The Shared Equity Scheme, suggested by Anneke from Matrix and taken up by Women's Property Initiatives (WPI) is going ahead. WPI have received some grant funding to conduct a pilot project to house women who have previously fallen through the cracks. There is an increasing feminization of homelessness amongst women who have often worked all their lives, but found themselves at pension age, without having been able to purchase property. Or they may have lost their housing after a relationship breakdown. These women may have at least \$100,000 in super or other cash assets, making them ineligible for any social or public housing, but on the pension, they don't have the income or the years left to be able to borrow to buy their own home. They face a future in private rental, using their nest egg to fund rental that is unaffordable on the pension. Once they have spent their capital, they then face homelessness in their very old age.

The Shared Equity scheme aims to provide secure, long term housing to women over 55 who will partly own their home. Several Matrix members were interviewed for the initial stage of this project and WPI are now looking at building a 3-unit development that they will offer to 3 women who wish to share ownership with WPI. For more information, or to express your interest in this project, please call or email Anneke on 0427 482 976 or secretary@matrixguildvic.org.au

Book Review *“Female Erasure: What You Need To Know About Gender Politics’ War On Woman, the Female Sex and Human Rights.”*

Forward by Germaine Greer Edited by Ruth Barrett

This anthology bears witness and exposes the current trend of gender identity politics as a continuation of female erasure and silencing as old as patriarchy itself. Forty-eight voices celebrate female embodiment while exploring deeper issues of misogyny, violence, and sexism disguised today as progressive politics.

These perspectives come at a time when gender identity politics and profits from an emerging medical transgenderism industry for children, teens, and adults inhibit our ability to have meaningful discussions about sex, gender, changing laws that have provided sex-based protections for women and girls, and the re-framing of language referring to females as a distinct biological class.

Through researched articles, essays, first-hand experience, storytelling, and verse, these voices ignite the national conversation about the politics of gender identity as a backlash to feminist goals of liberation from gender stereotypes, oppression and sexual violence.

‘In different voices, this compendium of articles shows how transgenderism is erasing the reality of what it means to be a woman. There are some marvelous essays in Female Erasure that make this book the recent go-to analysis of gender identity as “an inherently misogynist idea.” Read the writings by medical and psychological professionals who tell us about the wrongs their professions have inflicted on transitioners, including children; the accounts of women caught in the vicious cycle of transitioning and the stories of young lesbians pressured to be ABF (Anything But Female); and the narratives of wives of men who would be women, wives who learned the hard way that “women are [not] actually real to these men.” These are only a few of the meaningful essays in this anthology that address the current travesty of gender identity orthodoxy.’

~ Janice G. Raymond is Professor Emerita of Women’s Studies and Medical Ethics, University of Massachusetts and author of *The Transsexual Empire: the Making of the She-Male*.

You can read more or buy the book here: <http://www.femaleerasure.com/>

Have You Ever Been Homeless

Ruth McNair is wanting to interview LGBTI people who have ever experienced homelessness. If you have and you’d be prepared to be interviewed, please read the attachment called *“Call for Participants”*





Daylesford Stories

'Daylesford Stories, Acceptance of Difference' is a short film that explores how, since the late 1970s, Daylesford and the surrounding area has become home to many individuals who identify as gay or lesbian. Through the personal stories of individual community members, the project examines why it is they call Daylesford home, how the region became a place of meaning, and how definitions of the LGBTI communities have evolved over time.

View online: <http://cv.vic.gov.au/stories/a-diverse-state/daylesford-stories/>

Matrix members, Anneke Deutsch and Anah Holland-Moore feature in this 7 minute film. Be sure to explore these digital exhibitions featuring more films, audio recordings, and images - and share them with your friends!

Other People's events

Lesbians Ignite! book launch

Dyke Books Inc Book Launch of Lesbians Ignite! In Victoria In the 1990s, by Jean Taylor at the Kathleen Syme Library and Community Centre, Carlton, 19 November, 2016



The book launch of Lesbians Ignite! was another opportunity to celebrate our lesbian community achievements. Annie Pratten did the acknowledgement of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation, before she sang From Little Things Big Things Grow, (Kev Carmody and Paul Kelly), and a couple of other songs in her inimitable style, accompanying herself on her new guitar. The playwright, Patricia Cornelius, launched the book with an inspiring speech, (and if you haven't seen her latest play Shit!, do so), which gave due recognition to all the political work and socialising we did back in the 1990s. Rachel Morgan and the long lineup of DYKE DIVAS harmonised their way through their songs ending with the Shameless Hussies theme song, (lyrics Helen Potter), for an audience participation sing-a-long.

Ardy did another great job of emceeing the event as well as reading from Sarah's Melbourne, A Cornucopia of Lesbian Delights and selling a few books and had also food-shopped beforehand.

Most of the three cheese platters, chocolate ripple cake, two pavlovas and a vegan gluten free cake were eaten. And we all had a good time catching up with each other in between times. Thank you to everyone who attended and bought books, to Patricia, Annie and the Dyke Divas who entertained us, to all those who helped set up and cleaned up afterwards and to Pat Mitchell who took all the photos for the Dyke Books website slide show.

Jean Taylor
Wurundjeri Country

Long Breast Press



Call for Contributions to an Inter-Generational Anthology on Radical Lesbian Feminist Activism

Long Breast Press was established in 2005 to publish books by, for and about lesbians. Since then we have published *Willing Up and Keeling Over: A Lesbian Handbook of Death Rights and Rituals* and *Lesbians Write On: A Celebration of Contemporary Australian Lesbian Writing* and have collaborated with the writers of two autobiographies to put out *Esther's Nine Lives* by Esther Olivares and *Journey Into My Underworld: An Autobiography of a Lesbian Journey* by Jo Alexander.

Long Breast Press is now calling for contributions to an Intergenerational Anthology of non-fiction essays, articles and pieces from a Radical Lesbian Feminist perspective. We are encouraging contributions from radical lesbian feminists of all ages from 20 year olds through to those aged in their 90s and covering all the decades in between. We want to publish an anthology of engaging and dynamic writing, one that includes contributions that not only give us an invaluable overview of radical lesbian feminist activism from the 1970s to the present day but one that will be an invaluable contribution to the documentation of radical lesbian feminist actions and ideas.

For the purposes of the anthology we are using the following definitions:

Radical: relating to or affecting the fundamental nature of the oppression of lesbians and womyn and other interlocking oppressions including racism, ableism and classism under patriarchy.

Lesbian: a womyn who experiences love for and or sexual attraction to other womyn and whose primary behaviour and identity is as a lesbian.

Feminist: is a womyn who belongs to political groups, ideologies and social movements that share common goals for political, economic, personal. cultural and social rights for womyn.



The contributions must include but are not limited to the three central components:

- (a) personal life stories and coming out
- (b) political actions with descriptions of your own personal involvement
- (c) and how effective you think your political involvement has been with reflections for forthcoming actions.

You might concentrate on one of these three components more than the other two, you might also add some other element that contributes to the overall theme so long as you include a comprehensively detailed analysis of your life, your political actions and how effective they have been.

The following criteria also applies:

Open to Radical Lesbian Feminists living in Australia

Word limit: 3,000 words

Deadline: 31 March 2017.

Please email your contributions preferably as a Word attachment to

lbpress01@gmail.com

Please note this is a private invitation. Do not forward this information to anyone. If you know of a radical lesbian feminist who may be interested please pass on their contact email to the organisers.

Ardy Tibby, Barbary Clarke, Claudia Huber and Jean Taylor

LONG BREAST PRESS INC: Postal address: PO Box 168, Brunswick East, Melbourne, Victoria 3057;

Phone: 03 9387 6610; Website: www.dykebooks.com

Beautiful Lesbian Women

The Beautiful Women Campaign is being led by Breastscreen Victoria to encourage more women to participate in Breastscreening.

It involves a series of photographs celebrating the sometimes unconventional beauty and diversity of LGBTI women – taken by photographer Lisa White (thesocialphotographer.com.au).

LGBTI women will be photographed and 20 photos will be exhibited at a Midsumma. Attached is information for women who wish to participate in the Beautiful Women project and here is a link for more information: <https://alicesgarage.net/beautiful-women/>

If you'd like to be photographed, please call Catherine on 0429 582 237 to make an appointment for 10 December. ***Information sheet attached.***

Matrix Guild
VICTORIA INC

A VOICE
FOR OLDER
LESBIANS

www.matrixguildvic.org.au

LGBTI Elders Dance Club at The Newport Substation

Friday 9 December from 5.30pm

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex elders and their allies are invited to our final dance club event of the year.

We also invite our collaborators, friends and supporters to join us at this end of year celebration. No dance experience needed. All are welcome. The Substation - 1 Market Street, Newport (2 minutes walk from Newport Train Station).

Catering and drinks provided.

When: Friday 9th Dec 5:30-8pm.

RSVP: 0421 572 221 or tristan@allthequeensmen.net

Here are some photos of our members who went to a previous event.



Helen Tompkin-Puzey is Finally Free



Raped from the age of seven, and forced to marry a paedophile, 68-year-old lesbian woman Helen Tompkin-Puzey is finally free. She has just come out. Read her story here:

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2016-11-16/lesbian-woman-helen-tompkin-puzey-is-finally-free/7950958>



This year marks the 25th anniversary of 25 Nov being recognized as the International Day for Elimination of Violence Against Women. Globally, from 25 November to 10 December (International Human Rights Day), feminists are drawing attention to violence against women.

Lesbian Elders Input Requested

LGBTI Elders are invited to attend our first Garage Meet to help set the agenda for Alice's Garage for 2017. The session will kick off with morning tea and then Jamie Gardner.

Date: Wednesday 7th December

Time: 10 – 12midday

Location: St Kilda (RSVP for details)

Agenda

- 10am: Morning Tea
- 10.15am: Speaker: Jamie Gardner (Vice-president of Liberty Victoria and a former member of the Victorian Equal Opportunity and Human Rights Commission)
- 10.30: Working with Catherine Barrett to identify key projects for 2017
- 11.30: Rainbow Families visit and photo option

RSVP: Catherine Barrett on 0429 582 237 or email: director@celebrateageing.com

The deadline for the next Newsletter is 27th January, 2017.

Please send news items and short articles to:

Pat. M at treasurer@matrixguildvic.org.au

Anneke Deutsch Matrix Guild of Vic Inc. at secretary@matrixguildvic.org.au
0427 482 976

www.matrixguildvic.org.au