

# Matrix Guild of Vic Inc

## Newsletter

April – June 2009

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### “Dance With Dusty”

Welcome to the update for fundraising events for The Matrix Guild of Victoria Inc.

You simply must pencil in this fabulous event...Back by popular demand; Wendy Stapleton will be performing as “Dusty” to support the major fundraiser for The Matrix Guild of Victoria Inc.

“Dance With Dusty” will be at the beautifully refurbished Fitzroy Town Hall. There will be lots of giveaways on the night and a wonderful selection of music for you to dance the night away.

We sincerely hope that you can come along and with your support of this wonderful event which allows The Matrix Guild to strive and continue their work and assist our women’s community.

- Theme:** “1960’s “Dance With Dusty”
- Date:** Saturday August 15<sup>th</sup> 2009
- Venue:** The Fitzroy Town Hall  
201 Napier Street  
FITZROY – 3068
- Time:** 7.00pm – 12.30am
- Tix:** \$40 / \$50
- BYO:** Nibblies & Drinkies
- Bookings / Lou:** 0419 539 324
- Bookings / Sharon:** [matrixevents@matrixguildvic.org.au](mailto:matrixevents@matrixguildvic.org.au) or 0419 992 966

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me in the first instance. We are looking forward to catching up with you on the night.

Cheers

Sharon E Stanton  
Events Coordinator

THE MATRIX GUILD VIC INC  
Proudly Present

Wendy Stapleton  
As  
Dusty Springfield

Sat 15<sup>th</sup> Aug 2009  
7pm - 12.30am

FITZROY  
TOWN HALL  
201 Napier St  
Fitzroy

**Dance**

**With**

**Dusty**

*Women Only Event*

BYO Food & Drink  
Tix \$40 conc \$50 full  
Bookings - Lou 0419 539 324  
Email - [matrixevents@matrixguildvic.org.au](mailto:matrixevents@matrixguildvic.org.au)

## MATRIX'S REAL ESTATE TASK GROUP (RETG) UPDATE

The RETG has been busy over the last few months, inspecting 1 and 2 bedroom units and flats in the inner northern and western suburbs. We have been looking to purchase a property with Heather Chapple's bequest. It was decided that it was important to provide rental accommodation for one or two older dykes in an area that was close to city and close to a variety of public transport and infrastructure such as shops, medical facilities, library and also importantly, close to other dykes.

With all the activity at the lower end of the housing market, due to the imminent end of the First Home Buyers' Grant, prices in this sector have escalated about 10% since late last year. This has meant that our \$300,000 doesn't buy very much. Unrenovated, 2 bedroom units in the Thornbury area are selling for around \$330,000. It was looking like all we could buy would be a one bedroom flat, unless we wanted to buy further out. But we were concerned that an older lesbian could become quite socially isolated in the middle and outer suburbs.

Then we realized that there is a lot of Federal and State government money available at the moment, (because of the economic stimulus package), to Registered Housing Providers (RHP), to build new housing for those who are disadvantaged. After discovering that it would cost us at least \$100,000 to satisfy the government regulations to become a RHP, we decided to investigate how else we might be able to access some of this money.

Matrix decided to partner with the Victorian Women's Housing Association (VWHA). VWHA is a feminist, non-profit RHP, run by a voluntary board of skilled women, with 2 employees and supported by a lot of other women who provide free professional services such as legal, accounting, project management and graphic work. (See [www.vwha.org.au](http://www.vwha.org.au)). They have an exemption from the Equal Opportunity legislation to provide services to women only. We believe that the VWHA would act as a considerate and respectful property manager. They try to source women trades to fix things. Their policies and values appear to align well with ours.

Their main aim is to provide low-cost, long term rental housing for women. They charge 25% of income, plus rental assistance. Their tenants are generally women with dependants, but they do have a program for older, single women in the Moreland Shire. They own 11 houses at Roxburgh Park in the northern suburbs and 6 at Cairnlea near Deer Park. These are very outer suburban areas where an old dyke would be likely to be very isolated. However, they are in the process of negotiating to buy a number of units in a 4 storey development at 201 Albert St Brunswick, corner of Albert and Beith streets for use by single and older women. (Melways ref Map 29, J8). The building will have lifts and must meet the 5 star energy rating requirements. It will be a mix of one and 2 bedroom apartments. It is currently a vacant site; the building is due to be completed at the end of 2010. The price of the 2 bedroom flats (off the plan) range between \$388k and \$477k.

VWHA is currently in discussions with the Office of Housing where VWHA will put up 25% of the cost of 13 units in the Albert St development, and the government will supply the remaining 75% of funds. This is unlikely to become a housing commission-type ghetto because there will be a mix of ownership and residents; some VWHA tenants, some private tenants and some owner/occupiers. The development has a total of 61 flats and 20 town houses. Matrix is negotiating with them at the moment. We intend to put in Heather's money, and they will buy 3 two bedroom apartments for us.

We will have full nomination rights to the 3 apartments, but we will not be on the title. "Nomination rights" means that we will always select the tenants. We are in the process of getting legal advice on how to protect our 25% interest in the properties.

We are still finalising the criteria for selecting tenants, but the major points we have agreed on is that our tenants should:

- Preferably be receiving the full aged pension
- Have limited other assets
- Own no other property or other significant investments

Because building has not yet begun, we are able to ensure that all 3 apartments will have "universal" access. This means that if a dyke's mobility is affected, she will still be able to live independently in her flat.

The details of the properties are:

- 3 new, very comfortable, 2 bedroom apartments next to each other on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor with views to the north with lift access
- complete with quality Blanco kitchen appliances etc
- wheelchair accessible
- solar hot water
- gas heating and cooking
- air conditioning
- a small gym on the third floor
- a café on the ground floor (not operating at night)
- secure, lower level car parking with a storage cage for each unit
- situated in Albert St, Brunswick, between the Sydney Rd and Lygon St shopping strips and trams
- 400 meters to Brunswick station and a Safeway
- close to Barkly Square shopping centre.

Heather's will says that she wanted her money "...to be used for the purposes of rental accommodation for lesbians...". We think that Heather would be excited to think that her money could be stretched to house a number of lesbians in comfort, in such a convenient and lively location.

Anneke Deutsch  
For RETG

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## MATRIX AND RESEARCH

**As you may remember from previous Matrix Newsletters we have been successful in gaining funding from the Reichstein Foundation for research on seniors GLBTI people.**

The first research project has resulted in a report titled  
***My People: A project exploring the experiences of GLBTI seniors in aged care.***

The second research project has resulted in a report titled  
***Permission to Speak: Determining strategies towards the development of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex friendly aged care services in Victoria***

**Both reports are available on our web site: [www.matrixguildvic.org.au](http://www.matrixguildvic.org.au)**

### **Partnerships with other groups involved with the Project.**

Those on the committee were representatives from: Matrix Guild; Vintage Men Inc., a social and support group for mature gay and bisexual men and their friends; A General Practitioner, The Carlton Clinic and Senior Lecturer, The Department of General Practice, University of Melbourne, Member Australian Lesbian Medical Association Committee and Member Ministerial Advisory Committee on Gay and Lesbian Health; Admissions Officer Brotherhood of St Laurence; Victorian Gay & Lesbian Rights Lobby; Gay and Lesbian Health Victoria; The ALSO Foundation; Women's Health East; Women's Health in the South East; Women's Health West; A Consultant Geriatrician and Australian Lesbian Medical Association; School of Health Sciences (OT Program) University of South Australia, and Expert Advisor to the Steering Committee.

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## Vic. Women's Trust Publication

The Matrix Guild Management Committee are delighted to announce that the Victorian Women's trust has provided us with a \$9,000 grant towards a publication, which incorporate information gleaned from research and work practice guidelines for the industry. The Committee has decided to contract the highly regarded Dr Jo

Harrison and Marg Collins who are both experienced researchers in the area. The publication will provide the following benefits:

*The publication will be a combination of practice guidelines, resources, and a summation in accessible form of data from stage one and two (research projects Matrix has recently undertaken, which have been funded by the Reichstein Foundation). It will be an easily handlable product for those who work in or are consumers of aged care services, or worrying about becoming consumers. Dr Jo Harrison*

The project will also bring the plight of aged and disabled lesbians to the attention of policy makers. It will significantly influence the future quality of service provision as it will

- Address the suffering of aged lesbians
- Address the need for lesbian sensitive service provision and training of staff.

To our knowledge there has never been such a publication undertaken in Australia - it will be cited as such historically and hence be most influential.

## Matrix Guild HOME BASED SERVICES

### SERVICES FOR SENIOR LESBIANS

#### ★ Health, Counselling, Home Care, and Maintenance.

**Matrix Guild facilitates qualified practitioners for you.**

- ★ If you are a senior lesbian and/or a disabled lesbian and want a qualified lesbian to assist you in the above areas for affordable rates (means tested) give us a call. Sharon Stanton 0419 992 966 or e-mail [matrixevents@matrixguildvic.org.au](mailto:matrixevents@matrixguildvic.org.au)
- ★ If you are looking for contracted work, are qualified in one of these areas and would like to be considered for the service send us your resume.

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#### **Matrix Guild's Managing Committee**

meets 7.00 pm the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month in St Kilda –

**You are most welcome to attend and contribute. Ring to check if meeting is still on 3<sup>rd</sup> Tues. before you come and also**



**to get venue details – 0419 992 966**  
**Come and meet more lesbians.**

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# Same-Sex Marriage Issues



Diane Olson, right, reacts as she and her spouse Robin Tyler react as they hear the California Supreme Court decision that upheld Proposition 8, which outlawed gay marriage, in Los Angeles Tuesday, May 26, 2009. The court did uphold the validity of same-sex marriages, including that of Olson and Tyler, performed in the five months before the Nov. 8, 2008 election where Proposition 8 was approved by the voters. (AP Photo/Reed Saxon)

## **Why gay marriage should be legal by Kathy Belge, About.com**

Carla and Miriam fell in love and decided to get married. Last summer they held a lavish ceremony on the coast. All of their friends and family attended. Carla's dad, a minister, officiated. Miriam's dad wrote and sang a special song. After the reception, the two headed off to their honeymoon.

When they returned, they felt like a married couple. They moved in together, opened their gifts and started talking about having a baby. Even though, the couple feels committed to each other, they have none of the legal rights that protect other married couples. If Carla becomes ill, Miriam is not guaranteed the right to be with her in the hospital. If Miriam dies, her distant nieces and nephews have more of a claim to her belongings than Carla does. They file "single" on their tax returns and are not allowed to be on each other's health plans.

The Canadian government ruled on June 10th 2003 to overturn the laws that

prevented same sex couples from marrying. American couples can go to Canada to tie the knot, but it remains to be seen whether or not those same-sex marriages will be recognized by the United States government. President Bush and the Pope have both come out publicly against the sanction of same-sex unions.

## **Gay Marriage: What's the Big Deal?**

[So, what's the big deal?](#) If two people love each other, shouldn't they be allowed the same rights, privileges and responsibilities, no matter their genders? Yet, marriage is so much greater than the commitment of two people to each other. Marriage is an institution that much of our culture revolves around. It is also an institution that is in crisis.

Divorce rates are at an all time high. Infidelity in marriage is an epidemic. When someone can compete on a television reality show to "Marry a Millionaire", the argument about saving a sacred institution seems kind of pointless.

## **Gay Marriage and Children**

And then there's the whole issue of the children. Some argue that children are better off raised in a male-female headed household. Whether there is truth to that argument or not, is not the point. Many couples will marry and not have children: gay and straight. Gay and lesbian couples are having children already without the benefit of marriage. So are single moms, teenagers and drug addicts. Preventing a loving same sex couple from making a legal commitment to each other can only hurt their children. It can send a message, like it did in the case of one Massachusetts couple, that mommy and mommy don't really love each other, because if they did, they would get married. How do you explain the legal system to a five year old?

Some churches oppose same-sex marriage. Yet some, like the Unitarians and [Metropolitan Community Church](#), bless gay marriages and perform commitment ceremonies. The Episcopalians are debating the issue right now. Whatever they decide does not and should not matter. Separation of church and state is essential to the freedom we enjoy as Americans. It is also the value our Constitution was based upon.

Most of the arguments against gay and lesbian marriage are flawed and reactionary. They are reminiscent of the arguments against interracial marriages fifty years ago: that it will harm children, send the wrong moral message and devalue the institution of marriage.

Most Americans, perhaps with the exception a few in white robes, will agree that the ban on interracial marriages is nothing more than prejudice at work. Soon, we will look back at the arguments against same-sex marriages and see, like the ban on interracial marriages, that they are backed by nothing more than bigotry, prejudice and fear.

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**SHE BAR - Women Only Events**  
***2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday Every Month***

**Fun and friendly atmosphere with regular live acts, female DJs and special events.**  
BENDIGO HOTEL 125 Johnston Street, Collingwood.  
[www.shebar.org](http://www.shebar.org) - Call Sharon & Andrea 0419 992 966

For photos and information about our events, for back copies of newsletters, and full updates of the Matrix Research Project refer to

**THE MATRIC WEB PAGE**

**[www.matrixguildvic.org.au](http://www.matrixguildvic.org.au)**

Thanks to Pat Mitchell for designing, producing and keeping the page up to date

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**Matrix Guild Victoria Inc**  
**A voice for older lesbians**

Matrix Guild was founded by and for the benefit of lesbians over forty years of age. We are committed to the support of appropriate care and alternative lifestyle options for older lesbians in Victoria.

Matrix Guild was founded by a group of lesbians and it was incorporated in September 1992. The visions and aims of these women were to raise money to assist older/ disabled lesbians.

**Matrix Guild Statement of Purposes**

The Guild is established for the public charitable purposes of the relief of poverty, helplessness and suffering of women, and in particular lesbians, by without limitation providing home based services and accommodation to aged, disadvantaged and disabled women.

As an incidental and ancillary purpose, the Guild may provide training and education to home care providers on issues relevant to caring for lesbians to increase the sensitivities of the carers and the standard of home care to lesbians.

**Do you want to support Matrix? Here's what you can do.**

- Attend Matrix Guild fundraisers.
- Include Matrix Guild Victoria Inc as a beneficiary in your will.
- Become a financial member.

**If you would like to make a tax deductible donation to  
Matrix Guild of Vic Inc**

You will receive a receipt from Matrix, with our  
ABN number on it that states  
the receipt is for a tax deductible gift for  
Matrix Guild Benevolent Services.

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**Application/Renewal Matrix Guild Membership**

Yearly fee period from Annual General Meeting  
(Sept)

Full membership: \$20 waged / \$15 concession

Organisation membership: \$30 (or donation)

Send to: The Secretary, PO Box 99 Fairfield, Vic 3078

Name:

Address:

Phone:

E-mail:

This is a renewal / new membership.

I agree / do not agree to my name and details as listed above being  
made available to Matrix Guild members.

Signature:

Date: