

# Matrix Guild of Victoria Inc.

Newsletter - October 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!

Lots more interesting stuff to read this month. A report on our Lesbian Tea Dance, details of the presentation and video made by the young physiotherapy students who have been working with us for quite some time on this and plenty of other news.

## Annual General Meeting



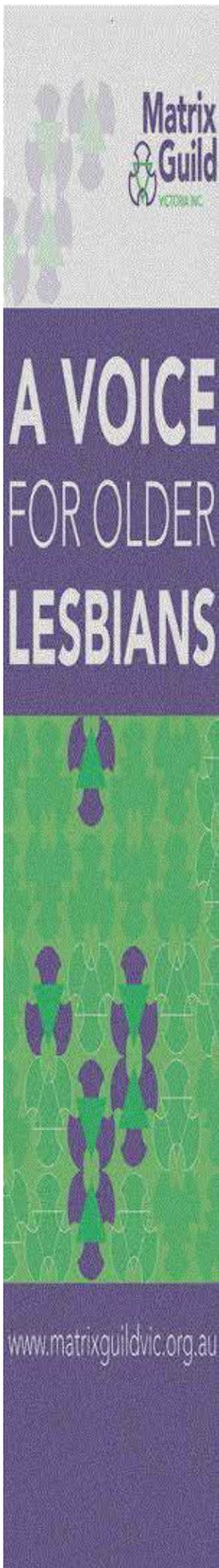
## Matrix AGM!

Come along and have your say and celebrate that Matrix has endured for another year. We have entertainment, delicious food and drinks arranged. Annie Pratten will be singing and playing guitar for you and Nancy has agreed to give a guest performance on her Erhu (a 2-stringed, traditional Chinese instrument)

**When: Saturday 12th November 2016**

**Where: Clyde St. Community Hall, 64 Clyde St., Thornbury**

- **2.00 pm** Afternoon tea (come early to chat and socialise over a cuppa)
- **2.30 pm** Annie Pratten entertains you on her guitar
- **3.00 pm** AGM



- **4.00pm Nancy will play her Erhu beautifully**
- **4.150 - 5:150 pm Short Film (21 minutes) "Terra Nullius" by Aboriginal lesbian, Annie Pratten, with discussion over more cuppas and nibbles afterwards. The film is a somewhat impressionistic biographical drama, about a young Aboriginal girl raised in a white family. We also see her as an adult. Shame, fear and denial about her Aboriginality pervade the film....**

Memberships are due on 12th November. If you can't make the AGM, please make sure you logon to our membership page NOW and renew:

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

or complete the attached renewal or call Anneke on 0427 482 976 if you need a form posted to you. 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.

## A Fabulous Dance

What a wonderful afternoon of music and dance we had on Saturday 15th October! About 100 lesbians chatted, danced and enjoyed sisterly company at the spacious Preston City Hall.

Kerryn Fields with Rosie Burgess on bass kept many of us jumping and jiving on the dance floor. Fields' warm personality and striking voice (reminiscent of Toni Childs) melded perfectly with her alt-country and roots stylings. Her songs are laced with rockabilly and soul. Rosie Burgess's energetic bass rounded out the sound. DJ Kerry played our favourite dance tracks and celebratory anthems, responding quickly to particular requests with a smile. Dyke Divas, dressed in purple, serenaded us with some sweet songs. This community choir welcomes new members, contact Rachel Morgan if you're interested in joining on 0402 880 178 or at [Rachel@rachelmorgan.net](mailto:Rachel@rachelmorgan.net)

Sound Engineer, Laura, did a great job with the mixing desk. Harry Grrl raced around selling the last of her raffle tickets. She raised an impressive \$1,047 to help fund Matrix's services. The prizes included a 2 night stay at Millduck lesbian owned B&B, (see attached flyer if you'd like to book a holiday with them sometime), a framed printed tea towel of Julia Gillard's famous misogyny speech and bottles of wine.

Meanwhile in the kitchen, Carole, Grace, Rachel, Hoang and Shanaz chopped, cooked and warmed up a delicious spread for afternoon tea with yummy gluten free and vegan options.

We welcomed old lesbians from Kilmore, Echuca and Numurkah who had seen the dance advertised in the Victoria-wide Seniors' magazine. Some of these women don't use the internet and would otherwise not have made contact with our community. A big thanks to all those who helped with the organizing, set up and clean up afterwards, we did an amazing job: Anneke, Fionnuala, Linda, Isha, Chris, Anna, Margo and Liz.

And a special thanks to our generous sponsors, Seniors' Victoria and The City of

Darebin. Make sure you save the date of our next afternoon dance to celebrate International Women's Day on **Saturday 4th March 2017**.

## Café afternoons cancelled until further notice

## MATRIX CHANGING HEALTH SERVICES DELIVERY!

### 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!

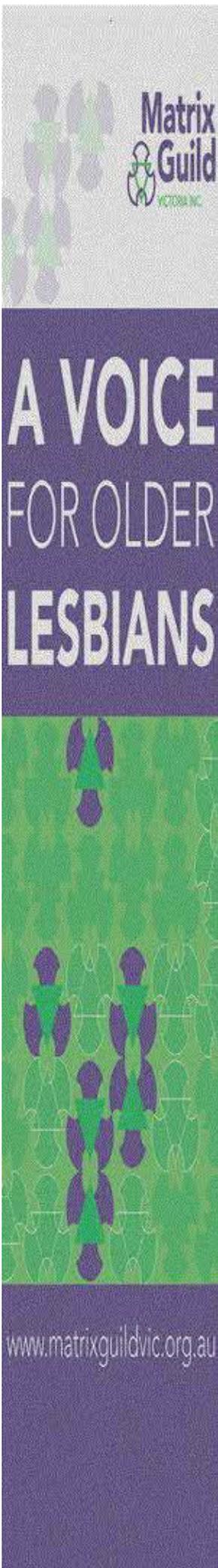
The student team consisting of three young lesbians and one heterosexual woman (Annabelle, Anne, Alysha and Rebecca) have done a superlative job and created a far reaching resource. Through their hard work in networking with 'the authorities' their work will be also taken up by the whole Health Department 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.

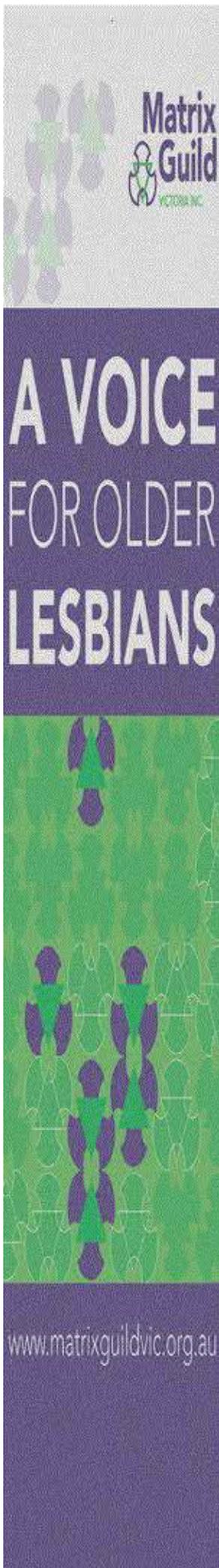
This is a remarkable achievement of advancing education of health professionals towards ending discrimination against older lesbians and is probably one of the most beneficial partnerships Matrix has entered into with any other group. It promises to have far reaching positive consequences.

Whilst there I talked to several of the lecturers and there is no doubt that they have a very high regard for our students and the work they have done in collaboration with Matrix. And this work will reverberate far and wide.

Of the 20 groups who presented on the day theirs was far and away the most outstanding. It was a highly emotional experience with the students declaring how much of an honour it was to work with a group of intelligent, activists such as Matrix and how much they appreciated the work we had done in breaking through discriminations against both lesbians and women in general. The presenters were crying, their supervisors were crying and so were many of the other students! They got a heart felt standing ovation from their peers and Pat and Chris got lots of praise, kudos and appreciation.

The difference from the other students, who also did very worthwhile community engagement projects with other 'minority' groups such as refugees, disability groups, indigenous groups, etc. was that our project addressed discrimination in an activist way – rather than simply providing a health promotion program (e.g. exercise and meditation sessions).





The deeper quality of our project was a result of the way our students consulted with us and took up our suggestions and then developed them to another level due to their own commitment and unique talents. It is an excellent example of what collaboration between older and younger lesbians can create.

Louisa Remedios who develops the Healthcare in Context subject so that Doctor of Physiotherapy students would learn to relate to the whole person, rather than the mere mechanics of physio treatment, has asked if she can recommend more lesbian students to work with us in the future. As our four students were presenting this video at their final assessment before graduating.

However they would like to get together with Matrix one last time to screen the video, have a discussion and a celebration of the achievement. Hopefully this can happen before the end of the year. I would encourage members to attend to show our appreciation for what we have all achieved.

Our treasurer Pat Mitchell will be world famous for a start!

I found attending the presentation inspiring and a demonstration of just what Matrix is achieving and generating as an organisation. I would encourage more members to become involved in future projects such as this. We are constantly being asked to attend consultations, talk with health professionals and such like. There is a limited capacity within the existing committee to undertake all these commitments. So more hands on deck would be appreciated.

The actual video is viewable on Matrix's website or at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HNaANAAs\\_ns](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HNaANAAs_ns)

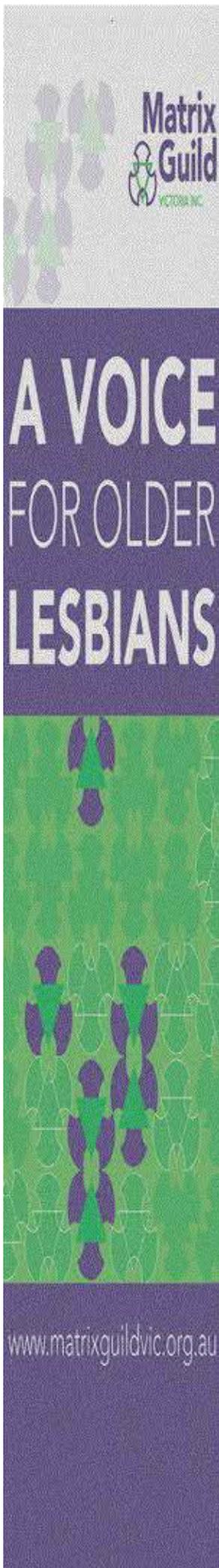
## Electric wheelchair?

Do you know someone who needs a new electric wheelchair, but can't afford one? Get in touch with Anneke at [secretary@matrixguildvic.org.au](mailto:secretary@matrixguildvic.org.au) or 0427 482 976. One of our members has one on which she is prepared to negotiate a very good price.

## Other People's events

### **POW**

The Performing Older Women's Circus (POW) is 21 years old this year. It was founded in 1995 when Women's Circus member, Jean Taylor, conducted a series of workshops in circus skills for women over 40 years of age. These workshops culminated in a performance - Act Your Age. After the show, members decided to continue as an autonomous group - the Performing Older Women's (POW) Circus. POW! is doing an acrobalance performance for Ovarian Cancer Australia at a forum about cancer and body image on **Thursday Nov 10th** in Melbourne CBD. Ovarian cancer survivors and their friends are welcome to attend. For more info about this gig and regular Saturday afternoon POW! classes, contact Liz Smith [lizellensmith1969@hotmail.com](mailto:lizellensmith1969@hotmail.com)



*Dear Sisters*

Dyke Books Inc. is pleased to announce that due to a last minute grant from the City of Melbourne, which was totally unexpected, there will be another book launch of *Lesbians Ignite! In Victoria in the 1990s*.

Not all the details are finalised as yet but the date is **Saturday 19 November, 2 - 4pm**, and the venue is the **Kathleen Syme Library and Community Centre, 251 Faraday Street Carlton**.

Please put the date in your diaries and we will post more details as they come to hand. Please note that this is an open and public event.

With love,

*Jean Taylor*

### **Lesbians Ignite!**

**In Victoria In the 1990s**



written by Jean Taylor and published by Dyke Books Inc

will be launched by the award-winning playwright

**PATRICIA CORNELIUS**

on **Saturday 19 November 2016, 2pm - 4pm**

with entertainment by the singing group

**DYKE DIVAS**

at the

**Kathleen Syme Library and Community Centre**

251 Faraday Street, Carlton

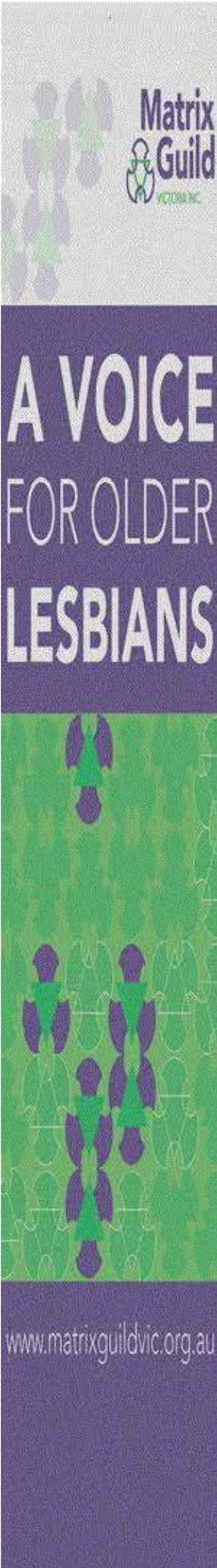
(between Swanston and Cardigan Streets, tram stop Melbourne Uni terminus)

come and enjoy a **delicious afternoon tea, singing, readings, speeches**, and much celebration

*photo of bees by Meg Irwin*



*Supported by the City of Melbourne Arts Grants Program*



## ***CIRCUS WOMEN'S MEMORIAL BENCH***

Invitation: ***On 17 November 2016, 6 - 8pm***, as part of the opening of the photographic, oral and written herstory and memorabilia exhibition, *Women's Circus: Stories in Motion*, in the Gabriel Gallery at FCAC, another three plaques honouring three Women's Circus and POW Circus members who have died will be unveiled on the Bench - (see full details on attached flyer.)

## ***An Unfinished Journey***

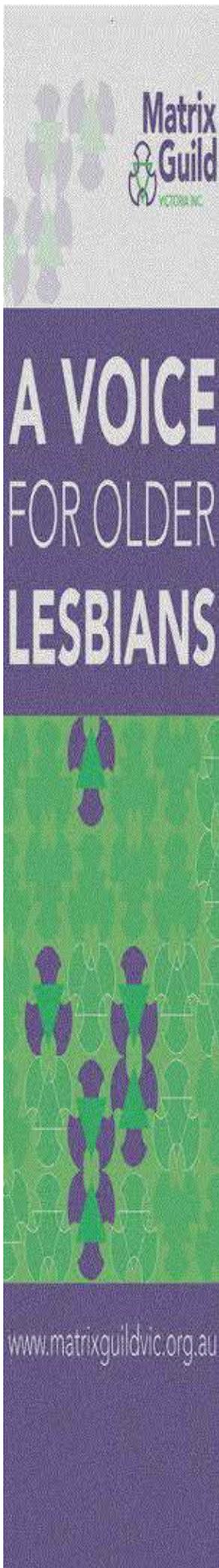
There is an exhibition that opened in Northcote library this week, *An Unfinished Journey*. This exhibition was first shown at Parliament House to mark the Victorian state government landmark apology to men convicted under unjust laws criminalising homosexuality. (*Flyer attached*)

**The launch is on Wednesday 9th November at 6.30pm.**

## ***Women's Circus Performance***



'The Penelopiad' by Margaret Atwood, has been adapted to mark the 25th anniversary of Women's Circus. With humour and pathos the cast explores the silencing of women's stories and the prevalence of violence against women in our culture. This is an ancient story that speaks to us today – a story that gives a voice to the voiceless 'maids' of history and lets them speak, sing and dance. The production features an ensemble of 30 dedicated members of the Women's Circus – acrobats, aerialists, actors, musicians, and singers. With live music and songs, the production celebrates the artistry and passion of an extraordinary group of women and an iconic community organisation. Look for Vig Geddes and Annie Fayzdaughter, Matrix member and second from the left in the above photo, doing acrobances on stage.



Read about the feminist foundations of the Women's Circus in 1991 in Jean Taylor's book *Lesbians Ignite*.

- **SHOW DATES: 22 – 27 November**
- **AUSLAN INTERPRETED SHOW: Thursday 24 November 8pm**
- **MATINEES: Saturday 26 November and Sunday 27 November 2pm**
- **TICKETS: Full \$30, WC Members \$24, Concession \$22**
- **VENUE: Drill Hall, 395 Barkly Street, Footscray West, VIC 3012**
- **CONTENT WARNING: Staged violence against women. Content may be distressing for some viewers.**

Further information and bookings can be made via the following links:

<http://www.womenscircus.org.au/womens-circus-presents-the-penelopiad-by-margaret-atwood/>

[https://www.trybooking.com/UserData/2016/9/229228\\_PenelopiadBW1copy\\_150916051946.jpg](https://www.trybooking.com/UserData/2016/9/229228_PenelopiadBW1copy_150916051946.jpg)

## Digital Community Visitors Scheme

We enclose a brochure outlining the Digital Community Visitors Scheme, a government funded initiative to provide LGBTI+ elders who experience social isolation and loneliness with social connection through Skype via a Samsung Galaxy tablet. (Supplied by the scheme if required).

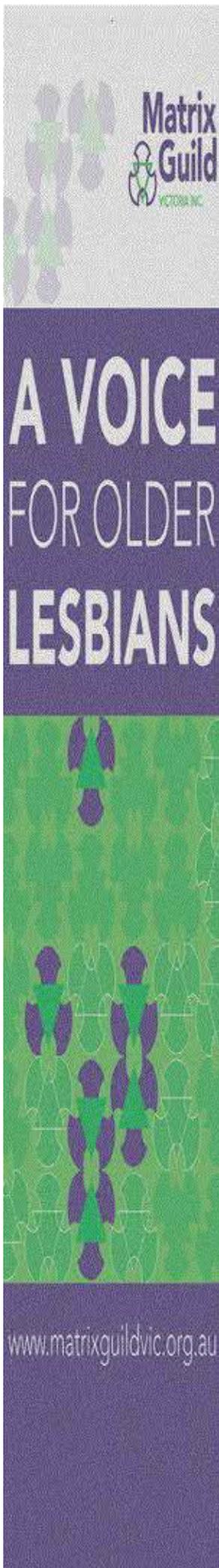
If you or if you know of any other elders who would benefit from this Scheme, or would like any further information about the Scheme, please contact Dana Savage to discuss.

Dana Savage  
Digital Community Visitors Scheme  
Ph: 07 3266 4500  
Mob: 0427 941 206  
dana@nac.org.au

## Response to Hepburn House

Hepburn House, a private Residential Aged Care facility between Hepburn Springs and Daylesford has asked for feedback as to what lesbians would like in a nursing home environment. Below are a few questions. It would be great if you could give them an idea of what you would like to see happen. Do you have any lesbian books you'd like to donate to them?

- What would you personally like to see in an aged care facility?
- What would you like to see happen in aged care facilities?
- What things do you think we could do or change to be more LGBTI inclusive. (I am already trying to source LGBTI literature for our in house library via Claire at the Daylesford library. Claire has branched out to other areas trying to source LGBTI literature for us, but to date nothing has come through).



- For future LGBTI residents/guests, how would you like our administration forms to be? I.e. [ ] Male, [ ] Female, [ ] other or not specified, or anything else you may like to see here that makes you feel supported and excepted.
- How can we make your stay so much better than any other aged care facility.
- What kind of things do you feel we could do, that would bring the LGBTI to our facility ?

Please send your responses to:

**Kevin Connor**

**Leisure & Lifestyle Coordinator**

**Phone:(03) 5348 8100**

**Email: [lifestyle@hepburnhouse.com.au](mailto:lifestyle@hepburnhouse.com.au)**

### ***COTA NEEDS LESBIANS' HELP***

Council on the Ageing (COTA) Victoria is looking for volunteer co-researchers to assist with the gathering of information about consumer perspectives of transitioning from Home and Community Care (HACC) to the Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP). The data collected is expected to provide a better understanding of what the expectations are of seniors from diverse communities accessing (or considering accessing) Ageing and Aged Care Services. They believe that they are more likely to get accurate information, representative of those communities, if the interviews are conducted by peers of the interviewees.

The co-researchers will be trained in two morning session in early November where tools will be provided to conduct interviews with 2 to 5 members of the community.

The co-researchers will be reimbursed with \$25 -\$50 gift voucher for interviews conducted.

If you are interested to participate as a co-researcher please email Lizbeth at [lgonzaleznaranjo@cotavic.org.au](mailto:lgonzaleznaranjo@cotavic.org.au) or call on 03 9655 2123

### ***COTA 50+ SURVEY***

We want to hear about the issues that matter to you.

COTA is the voice of older Victorians. For us here at COTA Victoria it is important to know what matters to you. That's why we are conducting this survey to understand your needs so that we can better represent you.

The survey will focus on "How do you find the information you need?" and "How you get around in your community?" in order to access the services available to you.

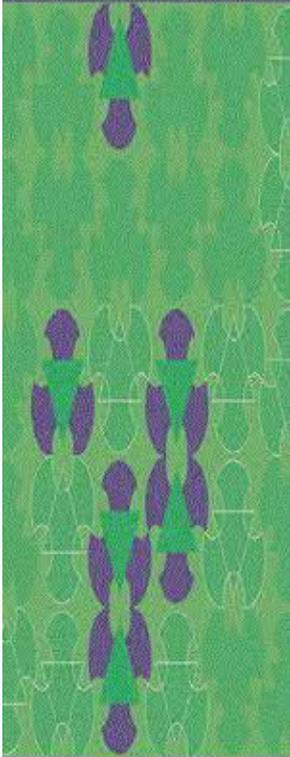
Complete our **survey** to get the chance to win an iPad or a \$500 voucher. ([https://fluidsurveys.com/s/COTAVIC\\_50plus\\_Survey/](https://fluidsurveys.com/s/COTAVIC_50plus_Survey/))

Closing day for the online survey is the 30th November.

If you want to get a printed copy of the survey please contact us on 9654 4443 or by



**A VOICE  
FOR OLDER  
LESBIANS**



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

email at [enquire@cotavic.org.au](mailto:enquire@cotavic.org.au)

Here the link to our COTA 50+ Survey campaign <http://eepurl.com/clJd1> if you want to share it on Social Media.

**The deadline for the next Newsletter is 27th October, 2016.**

Please send news items and short articles to:

**Rosemary Wealthy** at [r.wealthy@bigpond.com](mailto:r.wealthy@bigpond.com)  
0416 268 108

**Anneke Deutsch** Matrix Guild of Vic Inc. at [secretary@matrixguildvic.org.au](mailto:secretary@matrixguildvic.org.au)  
0427 482 976



### CIRCUS WOMEN'S MEMORIAL BENCH

PO Box 168, Brunswick East Melbourne, Victoria, 3057

phone: 03 9387.6610; email: [jetaylor168@yahoo.com.au](mailto:jetaylor168@yahoo.com.au)

We acknowledge and pay our respects to the Wurundjeri people of the Woiwurrung language group and the Boon Wurrung people of the **Kulin** Nation as the traditional owners of this place.

27 October **2016**

The Circus Women's Memorial **Bench Project** was set up on 27 **February** 2006 to establish a **Memorial Bench** to honour the memory of **all the women** who took active and creative roles in the **Women's Circus**, founded at **the Footscray Community Arts Centre** in April 1991, and the **Performing Older Women's Circus** established at FCAC in January **1995**, who have since died.

With the auspice and support of **the Women's Circus**, financial assistance from both the **Maribyrnong** City Council and **Footscray Community Arts Centre** to finance the project, and the agreement and support of **POW Circus**, we subsequently bought and installed the **Circus Women's Memorial Bench** in the grounds of the **FCAC 45 Moreland Street Footscray** in **2010**.

The **Circus Women's Memorial Bench** complete with the plaques detailing the names and dates of fourteen **circus members** who had died was unveiled during a ceremony on Saturday 4 December **2010** with many friends and family members present to honour the occasion. Two years later, another five **circus members** who had died had their names added to the **Circus Women's Memorial Bench** to honour their memories with a ceremony on Saturday 1 December **2012**.

## Invitation

On **17 November 2016**, 6 - 8pm, as part of the opening of the photographic, oral and written herstory and memorabilia exhibition, **Women's Circus: Stories in Motion**, in the Gabriel Gallery at FCAC, another three plaques honouring three **Women's Circus and POW Circus members who have died** will be unveiled on the Bench, as follows:

Mason **Schefe-Jones (Mase)**

23 January 1955-4 September 2012

Sharon **Follett**

23 January 1959 - 7 December 2015

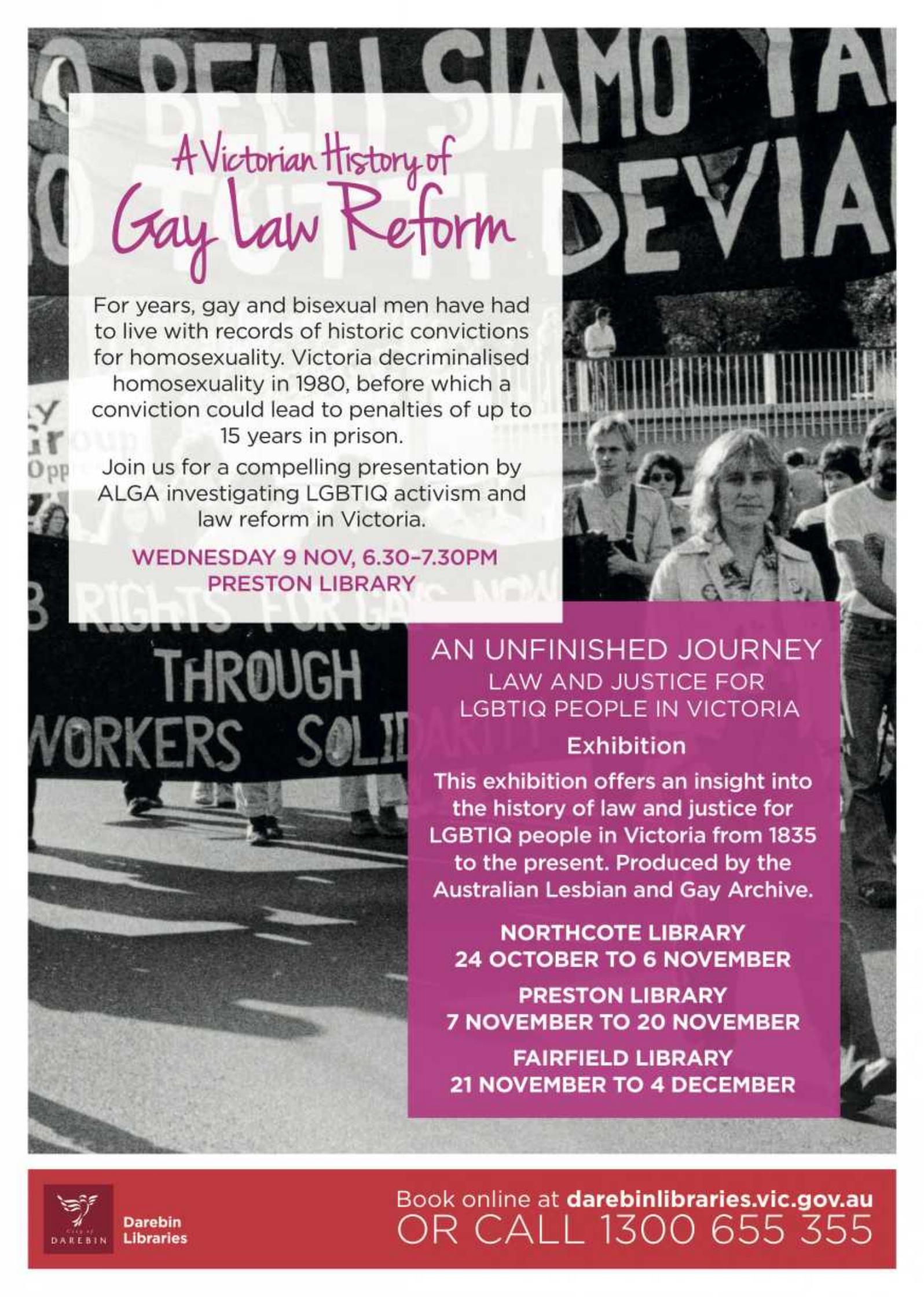
Noel Mary Brook (Rogers)

5 December 1941 - 21 January 2016

Everyone, and particularly **the** family and friends of Noel, Sharon and Masc, **are** welcome to attend this ceremonial occasion and **are** encouraged to say a few words to remember their loved ones. We're looking forward to seeing you there.

Yours sincerely

Jean Taylor



# A Victorian History of Gay Law Reform

For years, gay and bisexual men have had to live with records of historic convictions for homosexuality. Victoria decriminalised homosexuality in 1980, before which a conviction could lead to penalties of up to 15 years in prison.

Join us for a compelling presentation by ALGA investigating LGBTIQ activism and law reform in Victoria.

**WEDNESDAY 9 NOV, 6.30-7.30PM**  
**PRESTON LIBRARY**

**AN UNFINISHED JOURNEY  
LAW AND JUSTICE FOR  
LGBTIQ PEOPLE IN VICTORIA**

**Exhibition**

This exhibition offers an insight into the history of law and justice for LGBTIQ people in Victoria from 1835 to the present. Produced by the Australian Lesbian and Gay Archive.

**NORTHCOTE LIBRARY  
24 OCTOBER TO 6 NOVEMBER**  
**PRESTON LIBRARY  
7 NOVEMBER TO 20 NOVEMBER**  
**FAIRFIELD LIBRARY  
21 NOVEMBER TO 4 DECEMBER**



**Darebin  
Libraries**

Book online at [darebinlibraries.vic.gov.au](http://darebinlibraries.vic.gov.au)  
**OR CALL 1300 655 355**