

Archive No. 81

Anne Stafford (15 August 1946 – 7 July 1988)

Anne was a significant member of the women's and lesbian communities in Melbourne for many years. She worked as a carpenter and shared her skills with many people who were glad of her considerable expertise and her sense of humour.

Anne attended the first Witches and Wild Women Gather-in in SA in 1985, the Daylesford Women's Festival in 1986, the Women for Survival camp in Canberra in 1986, and also the Women's Spiritual Gather-in held in Wauchope, NSW, in 1987 as well as many numerous marches, women's dances, demos, fundraisers and other women's events over the years.

In the mid-1980s Anne began claiming her Aboriginal heritage and over the ensuing years gradually came to terms with her own fears and uncertainties around this sensitive issue at the same time as she was able to support and encourage non-Aboriginal women to deal with their own guilt around racism.

Even though Anne's life was cut short when she died of cancer at the age of 42, one of her most significant contributions to the community was in the way she insisted on being cared for at home during the last three months of her life. Her family and friends rallied, a roster for 24 hour a day 7 days a week care was drawn up and ably assisted by the local hospice workers who made sure she was pain-free with the requisite drugs on hand, Anne died as she had lived and in the way she had wanted.