

Archive No. 99

Jean Taylor (18 April, 1944 -)

Jean Taylor was born in Melbourne, raised and educated at state schools in Mildura, Victoria, and after leaving school at sixteen worked at a variety of jobs including nursing (1961 – 1966), waitressing (1967 – 1973), Student Welfare Officer at La Trobe Uni (1974 – 1977), Women's Refuge Co-ordinator (1978 – 1979), tram driver (1982), Circus Director (1995 – 1997), and writer. She married in 1962, had three children (1962, 1964 and 1966), was divorced in 1976, and became a grandmother in 1996.

Jean has written several novels, including Sappho's Wild Lesbians, Loose Women, Much Madness, Anna, Afternoon Suburb and Always Start Your Car With Two Bells, a few plays, short stories and poetry, most of which she wrote under the pseudonym of Emily George and self-published under the logo of DykeBooks since 1976. She has had numerous articles published in lesbian magazines and had *The C-Word* published by Spinifex Press in 2000.

Jean has been a radical feminist activist in the WLM since she joined the Brunswick Consciousness-Raising group in 1972. Over these past many years and more so since she came out as a lesbian in 1979, she has been a member of numerous feminist activist collectives and taken part in a great number of lesbian feminist activities.

These activities include: Brunswick C-R Group (1972 – 1977), Women's Liberation Centre and WL Halfway House roster worker (1970s), paid worker at Matilda Women's Refuge (1978-79), La Trobe Uni Women's Group (1973 – 1977), Women's Liberation Switchboard and the Women's Building Council (1979 – 1992). She helped to organize the National Lesbian Festival and Conference 1990, the Lesbian Festival 1991, and the Lesbian Festival 1992 in Melbourne and the National 10/40 Conference in Healesville in 1992 as well as being an active participant at the various conferences, LesFests and 10/40s round Australia (from mid-'80s onwards). She was a founding member of the Aboriginal Rights Solidarity Group (1986) Amazon Theatre (1989) the Women's Circus (1991), the Matrix Guild (1992) the Lesbian Cancer Support Group (1996); the founder of Purple Parrots (1986) and the Performing Older Women's Circus (1995) and a continuing collective member of the Victorian Women's Liberation and Lesbian Feminist Archives Inc. from 1984 to the present day.