

Archive No. 149

Helen Robertson: 10 June 1946 - 16 June 2009

Helen Robertson was born in Colac, raised in Balaclava and began her three years of nursing training at the Alfred Hospital in January 1964. Helen also gained her midwifery certificate and lived and worked in Europe for a number of years before returning to buy a house in Brunswick in 1982. During the 1980s, Helen was a member of the Orange Action group to raise money for womyn and children in Vietnam who'd been damaged and deformed by Agent Orange during the Vietnam War.

Helen joined the Women's Circus in 1993 and performed in the Women and Sports Show as well as on the barges for the Moomba River Pageant and became a skilled bike rider who performed with several womyn hanging off the sides of the bike. Helen also attended the clowning course, performed in the end of year show, *Death: the Musical*, in 1994, where Helen was part of a mind-reading act amongst other things, and was also one of the performers in the fifth Women's Circus show, *Leaping the Wire*, at the old Brickworks in Brunswick in 1995.

The Lesbian Cancer Support Group was formed towards the end of 1996 and when Helen was diagnosed with breast cancer in 1997 she began attending the LCSG meetings to get as well as give support to other lesbians with cancer. Helen was a member of the Lesbian Meditation Group which formed in 2003 and met once a month for about three years. After Helen was told her cancer had metastasised in 2005 she reduced her work hours and was careful to get plenty of rest and to eat healthily. During the last couple of months of her life Helen was cared for at home by her friends till she died peacefully in her sleep. Helen's funeral was held at the Uniting Church in Sydney Road Brunswick on 22 June and afterwards her friends and family followed in convoy to the Fryerstone Cemetary where she was buried.