musical composition
& lyrics
Pen Short
music by
Hens Teeth

*Hens Teeth* was a feminist band active in the late 1970s, known for performances of "wimmin's music".

References on the internet are scarce, but *Pandora* did archive one gay solidarity group newsletter, vol 1, no 5 August 1980, [here](#), promoting the 6th national conference for gays and lesbians, 30th and 31st August 1980 at the Merewether building on the City Road side of Sydney University, offering the program below, and associated attractions.

The film and the band are in bold:

**CONFERENCE PROGRAMME**


**SATURDAY**, Aug. 30: 9 am Merewether Bldg. Sydney University, City Road side.

10.00 am: Opening with screening of *WITCHES and FAGGOTS - DYKES and POFTERS*.

11.30 am: Workshops & Rap Sessions start: Gays & Racism; Counselling Gays; Gay Campaign against Employment Discrimination; Sissies Rap; Gay Task Force on Social Change.

12.30 pm Gay Health; Lesbian Music; I.S. Gays and Socialism

1.30 pm Lunch Break with Wimmin's band playing in courtyard. Excellent food available (Palace Wimmin's Cooperative).

2.30 pm Lesbians & Education; Counselling Needs; Death of the Gay Movement; Gay Rap Revival; Gay Community News Publications; Gays and Ageing.

3.30 pm Gay Teachers Round Table Discussion; Lesbian Health; Poetry Reading and Discussion.

4.30 pm: Out of the Closet--Out of Work; Male Sexual Politics.

5.30-6 pm: Daytime activities CLOSE.

8 pm: CONFERENCE GAY DANCE at Manning House in grounds of Syd.Uni. $4 and $3 concession Stray Dags, Hen's Teeth, Razor Cuts Wimmins Bands. Bar operates.

**SUNDAY. AUGUST 31**: Conference re-opens.

10 am International Organisation; Gay Trade Unionists; Gays whose basic language is not English; Young Gays;

11 am National Coalition; Counselling in the Future; Gays & Sexism; On Being a Disabled Gay; CPA Perspective: Marxism and Homosexuality.

12 noon: Drag;

1pm LUNCH BREAK

2 pm: Gay Archives; Gay Radio; Gays and Atheism; Christians & Homosexuality; Gays & Mysticism; Stonewall—Marches etc.

3. 30 pm: Final Plenary Session

5.30 pm Optimistic CLOSE to Conference.

The band also performed at a gay rights rally in Sydney on March 22nd 1980:
After seven months of intense organising six public gay forums, a daylong lesbian
convention, a churches gay symposium, the production of a gay info kit (the foregoing
just in Sydney), a multi-lingual leaflet on homophobia in Adelaide, tens of thousands of
publicity leaflets distributed and several major headaches, the Australia-New Zealand
Summer Offensive for Gay Rights culminated in a series of rallies, street marches,
concerts and dances on March 22.

Here in Sydney a brief rally was held at Town Hall Square followed by a march of about
1000 representing the diversity of the gay community and our supporters: political,
religious and social groups, lesbians and male homosexuals united around gay rights
demands. Even if the march wasn't as large as we had hoped, what it lacked in numbers
it certainly made up in spirit and militancy. Led off by the Gay Trade Unionists' float and
the NSO lead banner, we marched down George Street. Special notice must go to the
League of Library Lesbians contingent.

After marching through the city's streets we made our way back to the Town Hall and
down into the railway station. But make no mistake, gay liberation certainly had not gone
underground as our emergence 10 minutes later at Bondi Junction proved. We "hijacked"
several buses and commandeered them to Bondi Pavilion for the next step on our
agenda, an open air concert.

Anyone who was present that afternoon couldn't fail to be impressed by the high degree
of entertainment we had lined up. Thanks to Jane Alquist, Mary Jane Carpenter, Hen's
Teeth, Maree Cunnington and Peter Weston not to mention our madly gay link sister who
flew in especially for the occasion from a well-known country centre ... apologies to
anyone missed out, sorry. After a break for dinner the final event of the day was on. The
Boll Weevils opened the set Followed by the Widgies an all women band playing some of
the best rock I've heard in a while. With the drop in wind and the increase in attendance
the dance was the perfect end to the day. Many thanks to the people at the Bondi
Pavilion especially Jan and Ros for their help, experience and advice. (online here as of
March 2015).

And in The Age on 4th September 1981 the band was noted as one of the inspirations for
the Northcote The Girls' Garage Band, Toxic Shock, which featured amongst others, Fran
Kelly, who would later go on to compere the breakfast programme on the ABC's radio
station RN, the full piece at Google newspapers here.

Members of the Shock were inspired, if not directly influenced, by earlier women's bands
in Australia - Moonstone, Riff Raff, The Outskirts, Ruby Red, Flying Tackle, The Piano
Accordion Band, Hens Teeth, Foreign Body and individual musicians like Marnie
Sheehan, Celeste Howden, Janie Conway, Linda Archren, Sally Ford, Anne Harkin, Di
Duncombe and Jane Clifton.

But not much remains, officially, of these women's past, catalytic achievements. Women
breaking into rock n' roll in this country still find it incredibly difficult, Hellen Sky said. "But
there is a need and a desire for it to happen …"

Lyrics for song that runs over the end credits:

Get your laws off my body
I want them out of my head
It's none of your fucking business
What I do in bed
Gonna keep keep keep on singing and marching
’Till you let me be
I don’t want to start no hassle
But I gotta be ... gay and free
(guitar solo)
You denied my sexuality
You pushed me into a role
I’m not gonna pretend any more
I’ve got to be true to my soul
Gonna keep keep keep on singing and marching
’Till you let me be
I don’t want to start no hassle
But I gotta be ... gay and free
(guitar solo)
Just stop doing to the children
What you did to me
’Cause they’re gonna see right through you
By the time they’re three
Gonna keep keep keep on singing and marching
’Till you let me be
I don’t want to start no hassle
But I gotta be ... gay and free ...