



Honoring Alix: Lesbians First!

By Marie Emee, 1962

Wash your hands; wear your seatbelt; be compassionate; and love Lesbians.

~~~Alix Dobkin, shared by Retts Scauzillo, 1953

OLOC held a Zoom memorial [on August 16] for Alix Dobkin, international Lesbian folk singer, out-and-proud Jewish womyn, feminist, community builder, mother, grandmother, lover, and mentor ... warmly dubbed “Head Lesbian,” and, as shared by Ruth Debra, 1944, “Chief Bubbe,” for her compassionate support for her Lesbian sisters.

Thank you Mev, Bonnie, Ruth, and Retts for producing this event, and to all who shared stories. You fit a universe of love and memories into two hours and created a bold portrait of the amazing force of nature that is Alix. The collage of stories, slide shows, and Alix’s songs left many feeling empowered and hopeful in our grief.

Lesbian language was woven through the service with an amusing game during which Lesbian code words were collected and shared, just as Alix did when she composed her song, “Lesbian Code.”

Alix helped us to love ourselves and to raise consciousness and culture in Lesbian community, so it is fitting that our memorial service for her be a space for those activities. Z, 1951, said, “... this celebration ... reminds me about the Lesbian community we hold so dear.”

Many shared how they traded ambivalence for Lesbian pride because of Alix’s uplifting, Lesbian-affirmative music and support, and based upon the example Alix set with how she lived her life. “You can do anything you want,” Retts recalls Alix saying. “She put Lesbians first.”

Many described Alix as a sweet, supportive, and caring mentor who was fearless in her support of womyn and Lesbians. Ubaka Hill spoke about Alix as “an approachable spirit with feet on the ground, even though she was a cultural icon.”

Kathy Munzer, 1947, spoke about how important it was to Alix to build safe female-only, Lesbian-only space as a foundation for strong Lesbian community, how she loved to laugh and to tell

stories, how “she never backed down in her commitment to separatism” as a way to build our community.

Many spoke of how Alix was deplatformed for her insistence on the right to create private separatist space. “There’s no penis between us” was just one song in which Alix used humor to describe the threat men have always posed to Lesbian loving and community building. “He’s got the whole world to stick it in ... don’t let man-kind keep us apart,” she sang in “Talking Lesbian.” Alix set an example of how to live as a fearless out Lesbian, and how to carve out and hold female-only, Lesbian-only space. “She was bold,” Nedra Johnson said. “She showed us how to look and act fearlessly even if you’re afraid.”

Lavender, 1945, from Australia, discussed how Alix supported international Lesbian community and encouraged important work in other countries.

Susan Wiseheart spoke of her grief and how her dear friend Alix served as a model for “how to analyze sexism and how to not let people get away with it.”

Alix’s daughter Adrian Hood encouraged us to “keep singing her songs and telling her stories.” I am hopeful that, in Alix’s honor, we will continue to put Lesbians first, and to use our strengths and compassion to nurture our community. Hood spoke of her mother’s love for her Lesbian community and her sense of justice and how, even from the hospital room, she continued to raise consciousness to benefit Lesbians as a change agent. “Is she really a Lesbian?” one nurse inquired. “Yes,” Adrian said, “she is the Head Lesbian!” Even in her last days, Alix was showing the world, **“This is what an Old Lesbian looks like!”**