

# GayWest Magazine

April 2015



## **From the Chair**

Welcome to April's Magazine, the month when nature fully wakes up from its winter sleep. The month when lovers are out walking in the park. The love between two men, two women, man & women, the different love between friends and family.

When you read the news in the paper, on line or see it on T.V., or hear it on the radio, there does not seem to be much around at the moment. If only people would give out more love to each other. If religions, who are all meant to believe in the same God, would dig deep into the love pot and share their love for each other as they preach, what a different world it would be.

Last month I was able to take part in the Ashfield Prison LGBT History Month celebrations. Here, they were reaching out to one another, forgetting their differences, gaining respect and embracing the fact that we all need love. So in our own LGBT community, we should do all we can to throw away our prejudiced and negative views, get some love dust and sprinkle it all over us. Anyone getting Married?

More on the Ashfield trip elsewhere in the magazine, and also the latest news and events going on this month. Do have a good month and love each other  
**Colin**

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## Coming Out

On 31 December my beloved and I were married. While this of course has great meaning in our own personal histories, it just so happens it has wider historical significance. The reason being we are both women and one of the first same sex couples to be wed in Scotland. You'd be forgiven for thinking that given the historic nature of the event I was out and proud. But when the time came to share my marital status with the wider world, I realised I was scared.

Desiring minimal fuss, we informed only a few close friends and family members of our plans to wed. On returning to work I was hit with the dilemma of what to do when people asked how the Christmas holiday was. I didn't want to edit out the fact I was a newlywed, but every time I had a "how was your holiday" chat I faltered. I am new to my job, and as awkward as the wedding news was for me to share, the news of my gayness is equally so. The end result being only a handful of people at work know, so in delivering the wedding news I was also coming out.

So out and proud or in and mortified? I used to think I was the former but over the past month I have been forced to reconsider. I now recognise the root of my fear is rejection. I don't have an issue with people knowing I'm gay, I am just uncomfortable being the one who tells. When I say "my wife" I am looking for your reaction. I am studying your face for a change of expression, I am listening keenly to your tone when you respond. Because what I have done is to peel back a layer of my skin. I have said "I am different, maybe not what you expect, please accept me".

Of course being gay is just one brand of difference, a widely acknowledged one. Each of us are different in our own ways, and when sharing something that gestures towards that difference we seek acceptance. Whether that's about our sexuality, mental health problems, strange and startling hobbies or obscure tastes. I have realised that in editing out aspects of my life, I have prevented the formation of real connections. I have masqueraded as someone else. A person I thought I had to be in order to gain acceptance. Recently I realise this has to stop.

## Entertainment

**MAMMA Mia** is coming home! The first ever UK tour of the fabulous feel-good show will premiere in

Bristol, the city in which it was first conceived.

Written by Bristol playwright Catherine Johnson, the worldwide smash hit will open at The Bristol Hippodrome in March 2016, tickets will be on sale from the end of March this year.

Mamma Mia! is Catherine Johnson's and producer Judy Craymer's ingenious vision, bringing the story-telling magic of ABBA to life.

Featuring Benny Andersson and Bjorn Ulvaeus' much loved ABBA hits including Dancing Queen, Voulez Vous and Super Trouper, Catherine's sunny, funny tale unfolds on a Greek island paradise.

TICKET INFORMATION Mamma Mia, the Bristol Hippodrome, Friday March 25 to Saturday May 7, 2016. Tickets cost £15 to £59.50.

### **The Danish Girl (film)**

The Danish Girl is an upcoming American biographical drama film directed by Tom Hooper, based on the 2000 novel of the same name by David Ebershoff. The film stars Eddie Redmayne as Lili Elbe, one of the first known recipients of sexual reassignment surgery. Alicia Vikander as Gerda Wegener along with Amber Head and Matthias Schoenaerts. The film is due for release in 2016.

#### **The Plot**

In early 1920's Copenhagen, the illustrator and artist Gerda Wegener (Alicia Vikander) asks her Husband, Einar (Eddie Redmayne) to stand in for a female model. The popularity of the portraits leads to Gerda painting her husband in further pictures as a woman. Einar develops an attraction for a female physical appearance and begins living as a woman named Lili Elbe. Ultimately Elbe becomes the first ever recipient of male to female sex reassignment surgery, and Gerda supports her decision, although their marriage becomes strained when Gerda comes to the realization that Lili is no longer the person she married.



*Eddie Redmayne as Lili Elbe*

## Press Cuttings

### **HSBC CEO: being gay is a Career boost**

Antonio Simoes, who leads HSBC UK, said being gay meant he had “more emotional intelligence” and that attitudes were shifting in the traditionally macho banking industry. He spoke out as he was named the UK'S top gay,LGBT executive. He told a newspaper in his home country of Portugal: I think being gay is an advantage... it made me a more authentic person, better able to empathise,and with more emotional intelligence. If I wasn't gay,probably I wouldn't be CEO of the bank. He said gay people now have a “personal duty at the professional level to come out of the closet”.

### **Revealed at last, the true measure of a man (5.16inches to be exact)**

When Adrian Mole measured his”thing” and found it to be 11cm long, he fueled a generation of teenage anxiety. Adrian's 4.3 inches as recorded in his 1982 fictional diary by Sue Townsend ,was for many years the only measurement for teenage boys to compare themselves against.

Now British scientists have come up with a more scientific study of genital normality, which they hope will help the next generation of adolescents deal with their worries. A study of 15,000 men in 16 countries reveals the average length of a penis to be 5.16 inches (13.12cm) when erect and 3.6inches (9.16cm) when flaccid. The conclusion was there are a range of penis measurements against population percentiles, with length when erect ranging from 1.9inches (4.8cm) to 8.3inches(21.2cm).

### **We'll pardon gays says Miliband:**

Ed Miliband has vowed to adopt a “Turing’s Law”to allow the pardoning of tens of thousands of men convicted of homosexual activity when it was illegal. Alan Turing was convicted in 1952 but given a posthumous royal pardon 15 months ago.

Since then, his relatives have campaigned for the 49,000 men convicted under gross indecency laws to be similarly pardoned. Under a law passed by the coalition government, anyone still alive who has a conviction or caution for consensual gay sex can apply to the home office to have their offences removed from their records. Mr Miliband has said he will extend this to the families and friends of gay men who received convictions in their lifetime but died before they could apply to have the records changed. He told Gay Times that if elected Prime Minister in May he would make the matter a priority.

## A Tour of the BBC Studios in Bristol

On a cold but sunny Saturday morning during February, I visited the BBC studios in Bristol along with a group of fifteen other people.

Although security for admission was very strict, we were allowed in some areas to take photographs. Our guides were two pleasant young women who alternated from one studio to another. The first area we saw was actually the roof garden from which weather forecasts are made. Inside an innocuous-looking garden shed was a plethora of technical equipment: camera, spotlights, microphones, sound equipment and a clever reflective surface which had been incorporated into the drop-down front.

Thereafter we visited most of the important studios in the enormous complex which was established in 1934 and enlarged in 1990. Nowadays upwards of 700 people are employed there, and the news studios operate virtually 24/7. We went into the studio from which Points West is televised and saw all the autocue cameras. Other studios included those for Antiques Roadshow; The Food Program; Flog It and The Natural History Program. Some of the recording studios had wall screens which could be reversed - depending on the atmosphere wanted for a production.

Towards the end of our tour we took part in a radio drama with visitors taking roles from a given script. As the play was set in a creepy old house, there was much opportunity for ingenious sound effects. I read a sports report, and a woman did a spontaneous weather report which proved hilarious!

All in all, it was a most interesting tour which lasted two hours, and there was a question-and-answer session before we left.

There are three separate tours on Saturdays, and tours on most weekdays.

**Antony.**

### **Famous Quotes About Sex**

“Good sex is like good bridge. If you don’t have a good partner, you’d better have a good hand.”

**Mae West**

“The Difference between sex and love is that sex relieves tension and love causes it.”

**Woody Allen**

## Ashfield Prison Visit

On the 24<sup>th</sup> February 2015 Ashfield Prison held another day event to celebrate LGBT History Month. GayWest were again invited to take part which we did. IT was my third time at one of these events and on this occasion I was accompanied by Antony and James, which was their first visit. After going through the usual security procedures we were once again warmly welcomed. There was a brilliant display of posters and leaflets relating to various LGBT organizations, including items from GayWest.

The afternoon event started with an introduction, followed by residents giving their own personal stories and reading poems, that were personal in nature and most moving. There was a interesting talk and slide show covering the past and present ways of how some people believe you can be cured of homosexual ways!!

Next it was our turn to get up and talk and after introducing ourselves, we got into the swing of things. James gave a very interesting account of Gay West's history from its foundation to the present day.

This was followed by Antony and his own personal history. Next it was open question and answer time in which some very interesting conversations were had. Particular topics included discussions on sheltered accommodation for elderly LGBT people, and what help is available for the younger generation.



There was live music and communal singing with a buffet provided, and some good conversations. All in all, a very nice afternoon's event on a cold grey February day. GayWest has become good friends with Ashfield and is part of the group's support work activities.

*Photo from last summers event*



## Events & Information

### Beryl Cook: Intimate Relations

A retrospective exhibition of the work of Beryl Cook is on at the Victoria Art Gallery until 6 May.

Over 50 paintings by one of our best loved artists covering her entire career. The show includes paintings never seen in public, along with signed limited edition prints for sale.

Plump, sly ladies at their wicked best, eying up the object of their desires – usually a man, with such wonderful titles as: ‘Anyone For A Whipping?’ and ‘Dancing The Black Bottom.’

An interesting feature of the exhibition is a video interview with Beryl in her studio. On Saturdays 21 March and 2 May, 12.00-15.00, actors will introduce Beryl Cook’s work and respond to the people and situations in her paintings.

**7 March – 6 May 2015                      £3.50/concs/Discovery card holders free.**

### Sexual Health Care

T.H.T. Bristol has lost their contract with B.A.N.E.S Council, so residents in this area, including GayWest, will not be included in their services.

However, Bristol & South Gloucester residents will still remain so. The organization that will be covering B.A.N.E.S will be contacted, and if you would like any more information please contact us through the usual methods.  
Colin

### Any one for?

SCRABBLE: anyone out there interested in playing

Scrabble? I would like to start an informal group.

Please ring me on 0117 329 7682.    Antony

### Gay Outdoor Club

Sunday 19th April: Boats, Trains & Mysterious Gardens - a Bristol walk. For more information contact Ken (Bristol) on 07790 759162.



## **The Rainbow Cafe**

**The Rainbow Cafe meets every Saturday Morning  
from 10.30am – 12.30**

at St. Michael's Day Centre  
St. Michael's Place, Bath.  
(Next to the Little Theatre Cinema)

The Rainbow is open to all.  
First-time visitors are made very

Welcome and *are entitled to a FREE drink*

## **Contact us**

*To contact us by phone, call us on the new*

GayWest Mobile phone number **0758 469 6771**. The Line is open  
5pm – 10pm during evenings, If there is no answer, please leave a  
message on the voice mail and one of the committee will get back to  
you.

We can also be contacted: in person  
at the Rainbow Cafe any Saturday Morning.

by email:- [info@gaywest.org.uk](mailto:info@gaywest.org.uk).  
or on our Website:- [www.gaywest.org.uk](http://www.gaywest.org.uk)

## Cold Callers

I have lived in Henleaze for 25 years and can honestly say that no month has gone by without contact from a Cold Caller. These are persistent pests, who as we know, always say they are doing a survey and are definitely not selling anything. Here then is a resume of some who have called:

### **AT THE DOOR:**

We have some tarmac left over from a local job: would you like us to do your driveway over now? Jehovah's Witnesses; Salvation Army; Fishmonger; Farm Foods; Newspaper subscriptions; Old fitted windows bought for £85 each: we do wooden doors too!

Gardens and tree trimming; Drains; Roofs/Rendering/Guttering; the Rag and Bone Man (sussing out houses).

Callers who ask for cash for their organization .....are acting illegally.

### **IN THE LETTER BOX:**

Estate Agents desperate to buy properties in this very road, Pizza Vouchers/Sports and Keep Fit/Lose Weight Clubs. Obscure Charities leaving plastic sacks to be filled with bric-a-brac; Indian and Thai restaurants; Beauty Salons; Mail order catalogues (Kleen-e-Zee); Pets Care; BT; Virgin and Sky.

### **BY PHONE:**

Solar panels; loft insulation/insurance/car accident; change your fuel suppliers. Outstanding debts cleared by taking out a loan!

As far as I know cold-calling to a house is not illegal, but the Government has recently introduced very harsh fines on identifiable persistent companies harassing householders by phone.

There has always been a clear sign on my outer door which states "No Deals Done At This Door" and I have recently added a second similar notice. So, after all the stress of changing my phone number, I now get relative peace. Which is my favorite hate? The representative who falsely "remembered" renovating the outside of my home two years prior, and offered to repair "cracks" which he had noticed!

Sorry, but I have to close these ramblings as someone is ringing my front door bell.

## GayWest Forthcoming Events

### April

Easter Saturday on the 4<sup>th</sup> April at the Rainbow Café with an Easter Raffle and Easter goodies.

Bristol & Bath Pub nights on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> April.

### May

Come and take part in the start of the Bath Music Festival on Friday evening 15<sup>th</sup> May when the Rainbow Café will be open from 7pm-9pm. The concerts on this night across Bath are free.

### June

Gloucester Pride will be on the Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> (more information from the Committee).

### July

Bristol Pride at Castle Park on the Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> (again information from the Committee).

After Pride Lunch on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July at the **Phoenix** (back of Cabot Circus car park).

### August

Weston-Super-Mare Pride on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup>, date now confirmed.

## GMG South West

The group's website is [www.gmgsouthwest.com](http://www.gmgsouthwest.com) The group meets regularly in Bristol and Weston-Super-Mare on Thursday evenings and holds other social events.

## GGLC Gloucester Group

Meets on Thursday evenings at 7.30pm. New members and visitors can contact the committee on [info@gglc.co.uk](mailto:info@gglc.co.uk) or phone 07050 627273. and [www.gglc.co.uk](http://www.gglc.co.uk)

## And Finally

### The Nun and The Hippie

A hippie gets on a bus and spies a pretty young nun. He sits down next to her, and asks her: "Can we have sex?"

"No," she replies, "I'm married to God."

She stands up, and gets off at the next stop.

The bus driver, who overheard, turns to the hippie and says, "I can tell you how to get to have sex with her!"

"Yeah?" says the hippie.

"Yeah!" says the bus driver.

"She goes to the cemetery every Tuesday night at midnight to pray, so all you have to do is dress up in a robe with a hood, put some of that luminous powder stuff in your beard, and pop up in the cemetery claiming to be God."

The hippie decides to give it a try, and arrives in the cemetery dressed as suggested on the next Tuesday night.

"I am God," he declares to the nun, keeping the hood low about his face. "Have sex with me."

The nun agrees without question, but begs him to restrict himself to anal sex, as she is desperate not to lose her virginity.

'God' agrees, and promptly has his wicked way with her. As he finishes, he jumps up and throws back his hood with a flourish.

"Ha-ha," he cries. "I'm the hippie!"

"Ha-ha," cries the nun. "I'm the bus driver!"

## Cafe Talk

Filtered coffee at the Rainbow Cafe is the gossip of the moment, so for those of you who like this type of coffee we will always have filtered coffee, but maybe not as you know it.

There has always been an issue of getting the coffee machine ready and of the subsequent waste. But things are in hand.

There were several suggestions recently at the Rainbow Cafe about what sort of events we could put on this year. The committee have taken note on this and more information will be available soon.

Don't forget we need your help on Saturdays so be a volunteer