

GayWest Magazine



December 2015

£1.00

Chairs Annual report

2015 was a year for change for GayWest and with the gay community as a whole. Some organisations this year have found it hard to maintain their profiles and funding. This is always the most problematic area to be able to secure or predict. The committee are all aware of this and a lot of discussions are brought about on these issues.

Towards the end of 2014 we were struggling to find the funds so we could improve or develop a new Website, then at the end of November 2014 an e-mail dropped into my mail box from St. John's Hospital in Bath who were launching grants for locally based social groups. We applied and were amazed to be awarded the maximum amount of £3000.00p. GayWest was also lucky to find that the company who designed and built our new website were looking for someone to test their own internal club chatroom. This we have done and it has enabled us to have a top class website at way below the normally expected costs.

The site will need constant upgrading and work is being done at present with the recently new GayWest Facebook page and Twitter accounts being added. We have also had to add our Cookies Policy which is required by EU law now and again this cost of £150.00p plus VAT has been met by the company, who also host the site for us. So we owe them a huge thankyou for their help with this.

Unfortunately the committee does not have any "techies" so we are all learning a great deal about administrating a live website which at present is being managed by "silver surfers".

The main thing with any organisation like GayWest is we need to keep our members and recruit new ones for the group to survive. The new website has helped with this. We have had new members join us via the site and this is exactly what our brief was to the IT company.

2015 saw an increase in GayWest attending events apart from the usual Gay Prides, which this year were Bristol, Gloucester and Weston-S-Mare.

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We were invited to Merlin Housing's fun day in Yate which was a great event on a glorious summer's day in July and in September we were at the Bristol Age UK "Celebrating Age" festival day at the M-Shed. Also again this year we were guests at "Real Voices" in Ashfield Prison, who also generously collected £200.00p for us at their Five-a-side football tournament held this summer and we recently attended an official handing over of the cheque.

GayWest also were involved in the local L.G.B.T History Month that took place in February, which was one of the events we attended at Real Voices. Towards the end of 2015 we were invited to appear on Shout Out Radio. This was very enjoyable as it gave us a chance to talk about our aims and what GayWest can do for its members. As always The Rainbow Cafe has been a hive of activity and I am still amazed at the buzz I get when there, the noise level of the chatting goes through the roof! We had some great visitors, from the Stroke Association, Eddystone Trust (Sexual Health) our usual auctions and book sales and our own local MP Ben Howlett visited us, who has now agreed to become our Honorary Member.

Looking ahead one of the things I have been asked about was, what do we have in mind for the future in relation to GayWest. My answer was to modernise and connect with all L.G.B.T people, young and old, who even in today's world of instant access to the world at large there is still I believe, a need for that personal contact; loneliness and depression is on the increase among all age groups and being a member of a group like ours can help with this and enrich people's lives and provide companionship and support, even love.

To those who need support, whether they have just come out, or have personal problems that require a sensitive listening ear, or a shoulder to cry on, then I like to think that GayWest is still here to help and to provide support.

**So let me take this opportunity to wish you all
a warm cosy Christmas and a lovely Gay new year.**

Colin

GayWest Visits

Visit to Ashfield Prison

On Monday 26th October we finally were able to visit Real Voices at Ashfield Prison. John, Ernie and myself arrived there at 1pm and after the normal security checks we were shown into a room where about 15 to 20 new members of Real Voices greeted us. We were made very welcome and the event consisted of relaxed conversations.

Back in the summer Real Voices organized a five-a-side football tournament and raised £200.00p for GayWest and as we could not fit in the visit beforehand because of other commitments, they presented us with the cheque on this visit.

Real Voices is one of the many L.G.B.T groups that GayWest supports.
Colin.

Swansea Sparkle

Pouring rain in Swansea did not dampen our spirits when we arrived at the Swansea National Waterside Museum for the event "Swansea Sparkle".

This was the fourth year of the event and the best so far. After the formal introductions we had songs from a Welsh L.G.B.T choir.

There were many stalls representing different aspects of L.G.B.T life and the atmosphere was stimulating and friendly. GayWest were invited to have a stall at this event but at a rather late stage so it was not possible this time. We did have with us our literature, which went down well. I am sure that we will be back in 2016 with our stall.

Colin

Contact us on:- GayWest PO Box 586, Bath. BA1 2YQ

Website www.gaywest.org.uk Email : - info@gaywest.org.uk

Facebook —[gaywest.org.uk](http://www.gaywest.org.uk)

Also on Twitter —[gaywest social](https://twitter.com/gaywestsocial)

Annual Dinner

GayWest Annual Dinner

Friday 11th December 7.15pm

Starters

- | | | |
|-------------------------|----|--------------------------|
| Liver Pate | or | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Smoked Salmon | or | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Broccoli & Stilton Soup | | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Main Courses

- | | | |
|--------------------|----|--------------------------|
| Roast Turkey | or | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Roast Lamb | or | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Poached Salmon | or | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Moroccan Nut Roast | | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Desserts

- | | | |
|-----------------------|----|--------------------------|
| Christmas Pudding | or | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Fruit Pavlova | or | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Chocolate Mousse Cake | | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Members £20.00

Non-Members £25.00

Book early to avoid disappointment

Complete and return by 4th December

Leisure

On a bright October morning, twenty walkers gathered at the Cotswold village of Hawksbury Upton, near Badminton. We set off towards Petty France, with views towards Dunkirk, both of which were named by Flemish weavers who settled in this area during the medieval period. Turning to the west on a grassy track, we eventually reached Horton Camp, which is an unusual set of Iron Age earthworks, formed by only two defensive ramparts, the remaining third side being formed by the steep hillside.



After a stop on the ramparts to have our picnic lunches in the sunshine and to admire the panoramic views over the Severn Vale, we followed the Cotswold Way for a short stretch. On our steep descent towards the village of Horton, we passed a splendid country house and a folly. Although the folly appeared to be quite ancient from a distance, it was in fact built in 2000 as a nesting place for swallows and barn owls.

A series of field footpaths led us on to the imposing parish of St James the Less at Horton, where most of the group had a look around.

Leisure

The church adjoins Horton Court, a medieval National Trust property, which is currently undergoing restoration, and is sadly closed to visitors, however, a Norman arch facing the church was seen from the churchyard. A quiet lane took us along the lower slopes of the Cotswolds , giving good views along the valley and plenty of autumn tints.

For every steep descent there is a steep ascent! The path now took up steeply through trees and fields back to the village, leading, purely by coincidence, straight to the back door of the Beaufort Arms pub, where many of our party repaired for a drink.

The walk was led by John and Martin and the group photo was kindly supplied by Alan F. Many thanks to all who came along.

GAY OUTDOOR CLUB (GOC)

A wide range of walks and other outdoor activities locally and nationally. For further details see the GOC web site <http://www.goc.org.uk> .

Local telephone contacts are: Nigel 01793 770099 Ken 07790 759162 or Bill 07503 650354.

LOCAL EVENTS THIS MONTH

Sun 6th Dec 2015 Christmas Lunch at the Avon Valley Steam Railway. The local GOC group annual Christmas lunch will be held at Bitton Station, headquarters of the Avon Valley Steam Railway. We have a reservation for 40 people & have exclusive use of an entire carriage! Lunch is a traditional 3 courses. For reservations please contact Ken on Mobile 07790 759 162

Sun 20th Dec. 2015 portbury-hundred .co.uk I'm guessing that Christmas shopping will be done and dusted by now? So why not chill out and join our 5 mile woodland walk from the Saxon village of Portbury. One of the Portbury hundred.

Scouting and Pride

For so long Scouting and being gay just could not go together. As a Scoutmaster, I had to appear straight. There must have been many gay adults in scouting, not to mention the boys too, but it was not spoken about.

After 1967 and as the age of consent was lowered, a sense started to prevail, at least in the UK. (I even spotted it in Conditions of Acceptance of Leaders) that gay and lesbian applicants were welcome too.

However, in the USA, until quite recently “avowed homosexual adults and children” would not be allowed to join the American Scout Association or BSA. Believe it or not the ban still exists on adults from the age of 18. As a result of this, on attaining this age, a scout must leave the movement irrespective of his previous impeccable behaviour!

The US Defence Secretary, Robert Gates, who decides such matters, will not relent, as he is of the opinion that—”This might lead ultimately to the demise of the BSA”. Guess where such prejudice originates!

I am pleased though, to say that in the UK, gay scout leaders have formed a group called FLAGS Scouts. This actively encourages all LGBT persons, young and old, male or female to participate in scouting, without discrimination.

“Scouting is for everyone” . There is a Rainbow scout scarf to wear in addition to one’s own group scarf. There have been many LGBT scouting contingents as part of Pride Marches. Such participation was announced in advance of marches.

You can find out more of the activities and achievements on the FLAGS Scouts website.

So how does a Hollywood actress pick her nose?

From a catalogue.

Scouting and Pride



Unintentional Double-entendres From TV and Radio

A female news anchor who, the day after it was supposed to have snowed and didn't, turned to the weatherman and asked,

“So Bob, where ‘s that eight inches you promised me last night?”

Not only did HE have to leave the set, but half the crew did too,

Because they were laughing so hard!

Clair Frisby talking about a jumbo hot dog on Look North said: ‘There’s nothing like a big sausage inside you on a cold night like this.’

Film and Book Review

The Queen of Ireland

A film which has taken the best part of two years to go through the day-to-day life of Rory O'Neill as Ireland's premier Drag Queen "Panti Bliss".

It is set against a backdrop of Ireland's history of intolerance where homosexuality is concerned, but culminates gloriously in the equal marriage referendum which signalled a new country, all the while Panti is hilarious and inspirational. (Attitude Dec.15)

Carol With Cate Blanchett, Sarah Paulson and Rooney Mara

Possibly the most compelling romance of the year, about sexuality and oppression by society but it says a huge amount about friendship, class, family and love. A 1950's department store clerk, falls for an older, wealthy married woman. The story by Patricia Highsmith is so rich and intricate which makes for an intoxicating watch. (Attitude Dec.15)

This book is available to borrow from the GayWest Library

The Gay Novel of the Year

A Little Life—Hanya Yanagihara

The story of an abused man who finds solace in a same-sex relationship.

This Hawaiian author managed to turn this book out in 18 months while still working full-time as an editor. She allows her characters to develop naturally without labels or expectations, which she feels limit men emotionally. A strong male friendship becoming a love affair. A very different read. (Attitude Dec.15)

Film and Book Review

Spectacles

A memoir by Sue Perkins

This dry, witty run through her life is an entertaining read from this comedian.

Through her early madcap days, Edinburgh Fringe, her connection with Mel Giedroye and their time at The Great British Bake-off.

We also learn a little about the behind the scenes friendships, she writes about family, her relationships with people and pets. A very endearing encounter. (Attitude Dec.15)

The Gay Revolution

The Story of the struggle

By Lillian Faderman

This is a history of the Gay Rights struggle in the United States and the events have been given terrific justice by lesbian writer Lillian Faderman. She starts off in the 1940's through the 1950's where homosexuality remained illegal being classed as a mental illness.

The book is broken down into ten clear sections, Harvey Milk and Stonewall and Gay Liberation. The arrival of AIDS, gay rights, the trials and tribulations of the of everyday LGBT Americans from the past half century. One to have on the shelf. (Attitude Dec.15)

At Liberty by Ed Burstell

Today he is MD one of most iconic institutions in London. This relates his story of Rehab to the Front Row. An inspirational read!

Press Cuttings

The Beer that's had a "SEX Change"

Raise a glass to the world's first transgender pint. "No Label" is the first to be made from "hermaphrodite hops", which have naturally undergone a 'sex change' before being harvested.

Usually only female hops make it into the brewing process, male hops are thrown away because their flowers do not fully develop. But BrewDog, an independent Scottish craft beer firm, sourced hops that had "changed sex" from female to male flowers. It is said to Have a more diverse taste, but is also for a good cause, with profits from the 4.6 per cent alcohol beer being donated to charities supporting youngsters struggling with gender identity issues. So if you get a chance give it a taste and support a good cause.

EASTENDERS

If you missed it, they have introduced their first Transgender character. Kyle is being played by Riley-Carter Millington, his first acting role and he has said that he feels fulfilled; "My two biggest dreams of living my life as a man and to be an actor," although Coronation Street has , in the past had a transgender storyline.

WELCOME !!

The Committee would like to give a warm welcome to the **seven** new members who have joined us since the Annual General Meeting in September, and hope that you will enjoy your membership for many years to come.

GayWest Events

December	Tuesday 1st	WORLD AIDS DAY
	Wednesday 9th	Bristol Pub Evening 8pm Old Market Tavern
	Friday 11th	GayWest Annual Christmas Dinner at The Pavilion, Bath. Reception 7.15pm for 8pm.
	Wednesday 23rd	Bath Pub Evening 8.30pm Mandalyns
January 2016	5th,6th & 7th	Russian State Ballet of Siberia (Nutcracker, The Snow Maiden, and Swan Lake) At the Bristol Hippodrome
	Wednesday 13th	Bristol Pub Evening 8pm Old Market Tavern
	Wednesday 27th	Bath Pub Evening 8.30pm Mandalyns
February 2016	Sunday 19th	LGBT National History Event Sleeping Beauty
March 2016	1st—5th	Matthew Bourne's (Gothic re-write beguiling and true) Sleeping Beauty At the Bristol Hippodrome

Cancelled !!

Business

The GayWest Constitution

Following the Annual General meeting in September, the GayWest Constitution has been extensively reworded after consultation with members present and proofread. It is now ready to circulate and every current member will get a copy, It will be displayed on the Members' section of our website, located from the front page.

We are always looking for members who feel that they have a talent for Committee work, so whatever you are good at, why not give a little of your time and talent to Gaywest with all the things we do.

It would really be appreciated. Many thanks

Maybe you have a question for your MP

Ben Howlett is LGBT friendly and is our Honorary Member and is very willing to give advice and help where he can.

You can contact his office:- 01225 311422 for an appointment

The Rainbow Café

The Rainbow Café meets every Saturday Morning

From 10.30am -12.30pm

At St. Michael's Day Centre,

St. Michael's Place, Bath.

(Next to the Little Theatre Cinema)

The Rainbow is open To all.

WE WILL BE OPEN ON SATURDAY 26TH DECEMBER

(Boxing Day) so come along and enjoy the morning.

Business

GayWest Committee Members

Chairman / Assistant Magazine Editor	Colin O'Brien
Rainbow Café Chief Host	Antony Russell
Secretary / Treasurer	Brian Milligan
Events	Michael Reid
Magazine Editor	Jim Phimister
Membership Secretary	Jim Phimister
Outreach Officer	John Martin

Website Sub-Committee

Facebook / Twitter Administrator	John Martin
	Colin O'Brien
Website Manager	Michael Reid

The next committee meeting will be held on:-

19th January 2016

No meeting has been arranged for December

Please note:- We have recently updated our LINKS list on our website front page, along with the typed list at The Rainbow Café.

There is a lot more, hopefully, of interest to you all. If you find anything that needs adding, dating or deleting, please let us know.

A Christmas Box



Happy Christmas
from all on your
Committee