



GayWest Journal
For May - June 2017
£1.50 for non-members



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Chair's Blog

May and June are my favourite months, the freshness of the light and that magic of nature awaking from it's winter sleep. I have already taken many photos of this time of year that will I hope inspire me when I have the time to be involved in my other passion which is drawing and oil painting. Escaping into your own world is not a bad thing in this volatile world we all live in.

This then brings me to ways that GayWest can help you escape the world as well, so have a look at the events we have put together for you this year (pages 8 & 9) and as always, if you have any ideas yourself, please let us know.

Website:

With this addition of the Journal you should now be able to look up all the Magazines from May 2015 to read, download or print out along with minutes of committee meetings and other publications. The Gallery page has also been updated, and we have made it easier for new members and those wishing to renew their membership to do so on-line. Do remember that you have to be registered on the website to access the Magazine, Gallery and Members pages.

In your Journal we have a Members page and in this edition one of our long-standing members has his say. (page 12) So whatever it is your friends at GayWest would like to hear about, may be a play you have seen or music you like, anything really as long as it is clean, or saucy!!

So have a good read, do let us know what you think on anything!

Lastly, GayWest will be hosting a Quiz Night at Leyhill Prison on Saturday 21st May. Their Pride day will be on the 29th May, and we will let you know how it all goes in the next Journal.

Have a good May and June and your next Journal will be out in July.

Colin

This Month's Poem

I WANT TO BE PURE

I'm skin and bone
I'm human, a being
I care about the World,
About people.
I cry at the movies as the sentiment chokes my throat
I laugh at all that is funny
As it tickles the depths of my humour,
I walk through the park in the sunshine (as it warms my skin)
I remove my shoes to feel the grass between my toes,
Nature enjoys my company.
I read the Sunday papers front to back
And then snooze beneath the trees.
I'm just a person with feelings and emotions like any other
And I profess to be no more than I am,
Yet- I'm H.I.V
Which now changes things,
Suddenly I have a label attached to me
That isn't fashionable.
The stigma resides almost everywhere I go,
So much negativity encases,
I can tell you that no one will touch me, be with me,
People turn away as if in disgust
They raise eyebrows
As hurtful words flow from their mouths
And leave me emotionally battered.
Pain encases my life as they turn and walk away,
My hurt remains my own,
As does my weakness.
I'm alone and lonely
Like many others I'm just a soul,
I'm just a soul.



Theatre Review: 42nd Street

Following the huge stock market crash in USA in 1929 this musical was devised as an antidote to the worst spate of poverty ever to sweep the country. In 1933 the Warner Brothers studio in Hollywood produced it as the first full-length all singing-and-dancing film-with-sound. With a host of stars such as Bebe Daniels, Ruby Keeler and Ginger Rogers, it was a huge success and lifted people's spirits.

The narrative is the back stage story of producing a show and all the trials and tribulations that go with it: The leading lady is injured and is unable to continue, and an unknown girl is plucked from the chorus to take over her role. Of course she succeeds and with great aplomb, and becomes an overnight sensational star.

The revival currently at London's Drury Lane Theatre is, in my many years of theatre-going, the ultimate in stage musicals. One truly

spectacular tap-dancing number follows another and there are seventeen songs, along with fabulous costumes, sets and singing. It is breath-taking and awesome.



Valentino
16.04.2017

Theatre Reviews



The Red Shoes by Matthew Bourne started as a classical ballet, a good story line throughout along with some very dramatic modern dance, and with an unexpected ending. Well done, very enjoyable.

The London Gay Men's Chorus celebrated their 25th anniversary, with a concert at the Arts Centre in Salisbury by their ensemble of about 14-16 members of the full Chorus of 200. The performance was of a very high standard, and entertaining, they will be holding other concerts throughout the summer so keep an eye on their website.



Theatre

Boys will be Boys - *but not always*

Life is anything but a drag, when you star in **La Cage Aux Folles**, the Tony and Olivier award-winning musical that brought queer life to the attention of theatre goers for the first time, way back in 1983.

2017 sees the first UK tour of the West End show and starring John Partridge and Adrian Zmed. At The Bristol Hippodrome

May 23rd - May 27th

contact point is the Box Office or atgtickets.com/Bristol

All GayWest Post to :-

30, Woodpecker Close,

Bilbie Green, Keynsham, BRISTOL. BS31 2FU

Tel:- 0775 881 0134 or 0785 433 6047

Info@gaywest.org.uk

Cheques should still be payable to Bath GCO (GayWest).

Notice - Join us on Facebook you may find it easier by going to the link at the bottom of our Website

GayWest Events for 2017

May: **Thurs. 18th** Visit to the American Museum and tea room, at Claverton Hill. Exhibition of 1920's Jazz Age Fashion & Photography. Adults: £12 (over 60's: £10.50). 2.00pm + free bus journey from Bog Island central Bath to Museum and back again (every 20 minutes).

June: **Sat. 10th Gloucester Pride**, GayWest's seventh year with our stall at Gloucester.

Thurs. 15th June: A day trip to Weymouth and a meet-up with Weymouth Gay Group in early evening. We will be travelling by Train on the **Heart of Wessex Line** and the trains run from Gloucester to Weymouth, via Bristol, Keynsham & Bath You may wish to stay overnight or longer as some of us will surely be doing.

July: **Friday 7th Bristol Pride** Event on the Harbourside featuring American singer Belinda Carlisle, early bird tickets from £15.00p.

Saturday 8th Bristol Pride We have a stall in the community marquee.

Sunday 9th Post Pride lunch The Hatchet in Frogmore Street at 1pm.

Saturday 15th Bath Carnival, venue: bottom of Milsom Street, see Facebook

Bath Pride have a stand, details when available

26-30th Queer Spirit Festival at Thoulstone Park but need to book online.



GayWest Events for 2017

- August:** **Saturday 29th Weston-Super-Mare Pride Celebration, at Grove Park** (Early bird £3.00 Tickets are available at The Rainbow Café) GayWest has a stall.
- Sunday 13th Picnic at Keynsham Park and bandstand** (free parking) Meet up for 2pm by the bandstand
- Bandstand entertainment will be **The Redland Wind Band and Bristol Fashion Chorus.**
- A boat trip from Bristol Harbour side along the Avon – Date and time to be confirmed.
- September:** **Sunday 10th A Prowl around Bristol Zoo and tearoom,** Time to be confirmed.
- Saturday 23rd Age Festival** at Bristol City Hall, College Green. 10am – 4pm
- Saturday 30th GayWest's AGM at the Rainbow Cafe**
- October:** A walk in the park in Bristol up to Cabot Tower – to be confirmed
- November: A visit to the TV Studios at Bristol** more information later in the year.
- December:** Saturday afternoon or Sunday, first weekend in December: visit to Bristol Beer Factory for their Brewery Open Day – (TBC – when they have updated their website. MR to phone in autumn to enquire)). 12.00-6.00pm - www.bristolbeerfactory.co.uk

GayWest Christmas Dinner

Exact date to be confirmed (8th or 15th)

For further information on all listed events, contact us on info@gaywest.org.uk or Colin on 07758810134



The Power (A Thought)

The Power that makes us weak,

This is taken from a quote about 'soft despotism' that perfectly sums up the current political situation. From the French sociologist and political theorist Alexis Tocqueville (1805 -1859) he was born into an aristocratic family which had been rocked by revolutionary upheaval.

In 1831 he travelled to the U.S. and returned with a wealth of observations which he codified in his book Democracy in America (1835).

It covers society with a network of complicated rules, through which the most original minds and the most energetic characters cannot penetrate to rise above the crowd.

Men are seldom forced to act, but they are constantly restrained from acting.

'Such a power compresses, enervates, extinguishes, and stupefies a people, till each nation is reduced to nothing better than a flock of industrious animals, of which the government is the shepherd.'

Soft despotism gives people the illusion that they are in control when, in fact, they have little influence. The Editor



Miscellaneous

GayWest Social Evenings

Second Wednesday of each month - 10th May, 14th June etc.
at **The Old Market Tavern** in Old Market Street, Bristol.

Official Notice

When attending GayWest Events, would everyone please make their own way to the venues and book independently where appropriate.

Gloucester Gay and Lesbian Community.

They will meet on the **1st Thursday of each month** at the same venue and time, 7.30 – 10pm. Details of all their social activities will continue to be on their Website. www.gglc.co.uk

Prides for 2017

Gloucester 10th June, Bristol 8th July
and Weston on the 29th July. More on [www. Pink.uk](http://www.Pink.uk)

Weston-S-Mare Rainbow Café at Cameo Bar

On the Second Saturday of every month
from 2 - 4.30pm

Members Page

Some thoughts from Ernie:

Colin spoke recently of his concern regarding the need for the GayWest Committee to co-opt additional members as it numbers only four, who must now double up on the numerous and varied duties.

I would mention that I served on the Committee from 1989 for many years. There was no need then to double up as there were between 8 to 12 Committee members, male and female. Nothing was computerised in those days and GayWest membership peaked at over 400.

I lasted so long as I found it interesting and rewarding and appreciated that it was essential to have an adequate sized Committee.

We were then usually able to enjoy several varied events each week, including trips away, such as to Bournemouth, Torquay, Portugal, Paris and Amsterdam.

There was and still is great enthusiasm and talent within the Committee, it would fail without this. If you felt you might have particular useful experience or aptitude, or even if not, then you might discover you can contribute in other ways, you will be most welcome.

Colin feels that additional members contribute vital wider expression of opinion than just four. Meetings are now only bi-monthly. So, do please consider this and have chat with Colin.

Gay Historical Figures

All The King's Men !!

Sir Francis Bacon

Friends of the great English statesman and scientist have written at length of his acrimonious marriage and of his love of other men. At least one political enemy threatened to charge Bacon with sodomy, and his long friendship with King James I have led scholars to speculate that the two had an affair.

King David

Controversy alert! The biblical King and slayer of Goliath had a long, intense relationship with his friend Jonathan as chronicled in the ancient texts. Since at least the middle ages, scholars have noted the intimacy of their relationship, the wording used in biblical accounts, and speculated that they had a homosexual affair. Scholars are hotly divided over the possibility David and Jonathan were lovers, though one piece of evidence that supports the theory is that the word "ahava" is used to describe their love. The word is used to describe other sexualized relationships between heterosexual couples.

Richard I

Richard I of England (the King Richard of Robin Hood stories) had no children in his marriage, and contemporary accounts of his life refer to him committing the sin of Sodom (historical slang for homosexuality). He is also rumoured to have had a torrid affair with King Phillip II of France.



Queer Traffic Lights

On a recent visit to London, I was surprised – and I must say gratified – to come across the latest development in traffic management: pedestrian lights in Trafalgar Square programmed to take account of sexual orientation.



First I saw a traffic light with the two male symbols (for gay men). As it was close to the “Halfway to Heaven” pub, I thought initially that this was a new form of sponsored advertising (like flower beds on roundabouts). Then looking round, I saw a light with two female signs (for lesbians) and then another with a composite sign (for trans). There was even one with a male and

female symbol (for heterosexuals). In short, a rainbow coalition of traffic lights, except that these were all green.

Curiously, the red stop signs were all the same. I couldn’t find anything about it in the Highway Code (at least, not as I remembered it when I took the driving test fifty years ago), so I wondered how a law-abiding pedestrian should interpret these signs. Red means Brexit, I mean, stop,



Queer Traffic Lights



(so very boring but better for road safety).

Everyone has to stop. But what if you are straight and come across a lesbian sign. Do you have to wait until an engineer eventually comes along and changes it?

And can gay men cross on the trans sign

or will that cause a diplomatic incident within the LGBTQI+ community? Difficult questions to have to answer when you are rushing to catch a train.

Anyway, this being Britain (well, London), nobody was taking any notice of the traffic lights anyway and people were crossing only when the traffic stopped. Still, in the year when we are commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the 1967 Sexual Offences Act, I applaud the traffic authorities for finding their own special way of celebrating sexual diversity.

Robert



Obituary

We're saddened to hear of the death of Gilbert Baker at the age of 65, on March 30th. The man who in 1978 designed what we now know as the Rainbow Flag. It was Harvey Milk who originally asked the San Francisco-based designer to create the flag for the city's 'Gay Freedom Day' and the original eight colour Freedom Flag was born. With the help from volunteers, he filled trash cans with dye in the attic of the Gay Community Centre in San Francisco, then dyed and stitched together eight strips of



vibrantly coloured fabric into a rainbow flag, instantly creating an enduring international symbol of gay pride. The first flags had eight colours, each stripe giving its own significance; pink for sex, red for life, orange for healing, yellow for sun, green for nature, turquoise for magic, blue for spirit.