

GayWest Journal  
For January and February 2018  
£1.50 for non-members

# What a difference a Gay makes!

W. H. Auden poet  
Noel Coward actor  
Amelia Earhart aviator  
**Rock Hudson** actor  
Oscar Wilde playwright  
RUDOLPH NUREYEV dancer  
Richard The Lion-hearted King of England  
Gertrude Stein writer  
Henry James author **Andy Warhol** painter  
Christopher Marlowe playwright Walt Whitman poet  
**Michelangelo** painter, sculptor Marcel Proust author  
Alan Turing broke Nazi codes **Bessie Smith** singer  
EDITH HEAD costumer Somerset Maugham novelist  
Florence Nightingale nurse Tallulah Bankhead actress  
Alexander Hamilton American founding father  
Randy Shilts AIDS activist **Tchaikovsky** composer  
Yukio Mishima Nobel novelist Tennessee Williams playwright  
**Leonardo Da Vinci** painter, inventor

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**and ME!**

# Features

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by going to the link at the bottom of our Website

# Chair's Blog

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**W**elcome to a New Year, and let me first wish you all a Happy New Year. So here we are at the start of another new year and already plans are being made for events this year, but before I get on to those , let's have a little look back on 2017. A busy year for those on the GayWest committee, with the prides, social outings, supporting the prison focus groups, managing the GayWest website, attending other LGBT organisations meetings and events, publicising GayWest, and letting everyone in the gay and wider community know what we are about . Making up and publishing the GayWest Journal, ensuring the Rainbow Café is kept open and running smoothly, looking after our members, and making being a member of GayWest an enjoyable experience. It has been enjoyable but at times tiring work.

So to the year ahead, there will be changes I think , as with maintaining any organisation you must always be looking ahead and listening to your members (ooh lots of gossip here!!) and implementing any changes you may deem necessary. So I am going to be incredibly boring here and once again remind you all that we need more help on our committee, someone a bit techy would be good, any offers? Someone with a flair for literature/ journalism who has always had the passion to put their thoughts in writing. Please give this some thought. We could do with your input.

## Chair's Blog Contd.

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**S**o this year we are going to concentrate more on "The Rainbow Café" and what you get for being a member. We will not be putting GayWest forward to have a stall at any of the local Prides. We will not be organising any social events and this will include the annual Picnic, unless we get more help from our members to help with organising and taking part. We will still advertise events by others that we feel would be of interest to our members, We will however be having February as always, to celebrate the L.G.B.T. History Month, and this year we are planning an event to be held at the Rainbow Café, see more details later on in this issue. Also an idea we are working on is to hold an Arts and Craft Fair at the Café sometime in the summer. We have to be looking at ways to raise funds for the group and this is one that has been suggested. Many of you may wonder why we have dropped having raffles along with the famous auctions. This is mainly due to ,not having enough guys on the committee to manage the auctions and the fact they have become a bit tired these days. So any idea's for what we can do to help raise funds, please let us know, and get involved.

At the moment we are putting together information of what you as a member get for your membership fee, and what income the organisation needs to survive into the future. This will include all the details you need to see where all the income from your fees and income from funds go.

## Chair's Blog Contd.

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GayWest is one of the few L.G.B.T. groups that are bucking the trend and maintaining its membership, and we on the committee hope this will continue for the benefit of our members and the L.G.B.T community as a whole.

Also, every member will be receiving a small booklet on what are the benefits for being a member, this will include information on The Book Library (we also need someone to look after this for us); how to use the website, which is in the process of being upgraded; the Journal; the "Rainbow Café" and lots more. So I hope this New Year will be as successful as many of our past years and add to GayWest's long history.

Have a happy New Year. Colin.



### **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. BA1 1SG  
(next to the Little Theatre Cinema)

The Rainbow is open to all.

First-time visitors are made very  
welcome and are entitled to their **first drink FREE.**

# Official Notices

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**It is with great sadness that we learnt of the death of Nigel Bunce one of our long-term members, our thoughts are with his partner Mark at this sad time.**

**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](http://www.gglc.co.uk)

**Weston-S-Mare Rainbow Café at Cameo Bar**

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

**All GayWest Post to :-**

30, Woodpecker Close,

Keynsham, BRISTOL. BS31 2FU

Tel:- 0775 881 0134 or 0785 433 6047

[Info@gaywest.org.uk](mailto:Info@gaywest.org.uk)

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**T**he Committee wants its members to get the most out of this unique organisation that will now be into its forty-seventh year, but it needs you as members to get involved, in any way that you can, so Gaywest can continue into the next decade.

Footnote: - Since the Annual General Meeting (A.G.M.) Robert Howes has very kindly offered to run the Rainbow Café on an Occasional basis, and John Martin has agreed to be a co-opted member to run the Facebook, Twitter and be Prison Outreach Officer. Please give some thought to helping us and GayWest over the next year. Colin.



### **Leyhill focus group.**

**O**n Thursday 16th November we dragged ourselves from our warm home and went out into the cold night and travelled to Leyhill Prison. We arrived about ten minutes before the start of the meeting which was at 6.30pm.

We were warmly welcomed as usual and settled down to mainly observe and answer any questions that the group wished to ask us. It was a very informal meeting and as always interesting. Our presence there helps the individual members of the group to have a physical contact with GayWest rather than just to know about us through talk and print. We also receive feedback through the group regarding the help and support they get from GayWest.

# Recent Art Exhibitions

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2017 marked the 50th anniversary of the partial decriminalisation of male homosexuality in England and Wales. To mark the event, two major London cultural institutions put on special exhibitions, which I visited over the summer. Meanwhile, an exhibition on sexuality has opened in Brazil.

The larger of the London shows was “Queer British Art, 1861-1967”, which ranged from Victorian painters such as Simeon Solomon and Henry Scott Tuke through Bloomsbury to Francis Bacon and David Hockney. The exhibition covered painting, photography and the theatre, with images of same-sex desire, both male and female, as well as trans identity and cross-dressing. Several photographs were by Angus McBean, a London theatrical photographer who moved his studio to Bath during the Second World War and was arrested and imprisoned for having sex with servicemen, a major scandal at the time. There was some nudity and erotic images but nothing that would really scare the horses. The most striking images were of or by women – a portrait of Vita Sackville-West wearing a large red hat and a dark green dress by William Strang, and a self-portrait of Laura Knight painting a female nude, a rather shocking idea in 1913. Another notable image, used to publicise the exhibition, was a self-portrait by Gluck, an artist who used the pronoun “she” but might well identify nowadays as a trans man.





# Recent Art Exhibitions

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Perhaps the most moving exhibits, however, were not artistic creations but physical objects: the visiting card left by the Marquis of Queensbury which triggered the Oscar Wilde trials in 1895 (literally a visiting card, measuring about 3.5 x 2 inches) and, far more massive and intimidating, the door from Wilde's cell in Reading Jail.

"Queer British Art" was a big exhibition occupying eight rooms and widely publicised both inside and beyond Tate Britain. The British Museum exhibition, "Desire, love, identity: exploring LGBTQ histories" was much smaller and more focussed on same-sex desire and identity. The most notable part was a collection of badges from the gay movement. Curiously, this exhibition was in a tiny room which can only be described as a closet and with no signposting. I had to ask several times in the Museum before I could find it. This is strange, because the British Museum has published a book entitled *A little gay history*, so it cannot be institutional homophobia. Still, I wonder how many people found the exhibition.

In contrast, another exhibition currently on in the São Paulo Museum of Art, the most important art gallery in Brazil, which is entitled "Histories of Sexuality" (a wordplay on the title of Michel Foucault's famous book *History of sexuality*), occupies most of the museum. Homosexuality has been legal in Brazil since the 1850s, so there is no anniversary to celebrate, but it is still controversial, as measures in favour of LGBTQ rights have been consistently voted down in Congress by evangelical Christians. The exhibition was initially restricted to those over 18, perhaps for fear of public reaction, but has since been opened to minors accompanied by adults. When you go in, you see why there were some worries.

# Recent Art Exhibitions

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No punches have been pulled in showing images of full frontal male and female nudity, explicit sexual acts, violence and sexual language. Many of the exhibits are related to trans or “travestis”, a controversial subject in Brazil. A notable aspect of the exhibition is that one whole section is devoted to the gay press, a part of LGBTQ history which is much studied and celebrated in Brazil but virtually ignored in Britain.

All three exhibitions portrayed different aspects of LGBTQ life. It is good to see that our community and our history are being addressed by major cultural institutions in different countries.

Robert Howes



## Stonewall

On Saturday 7th October at The Rainbow Café we had a quiz and raffle in aid of “The Stonewall Season” when we managed to raise £40.00 for their work.

We sent this off to them and we have had a letter of thanks.



## World Aids Day December 1st 2017

GayWest was represented at the Blue Plaque unveiling to **Aled Richards** and **Terrance Higgins Trusts** and if you missed this, the Plaque can be seen on the wall, outside 8-10 West Street, Old Market, Bristol.

# The Snowdrop Season

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## National Garden Scheme

Places to visit in Somerset to view the Snowdrops:-

Elworthy Cottage near Exmoor, historic Nynehead Court near Wellington, East Lambrook Manor near South Petherton.

There is Rock House at Elberton, Thornbury, Vine House , Henbury and **Hanham Court**, Sherborne Garden at Litton, Radstock and Southfield Farm Backwell.

All details are available from [www.ngs.org.uk](http://www.ngs.org.uk) or check the NGS handbook for February.

If you wish to go further afield, there is Castle Drogo at the Teign Gorge which is a **National Trust** Estate, Café, Shop and Gardens. [Nationaltrust.org.uk/castle-drogo](http://Nationaltrust.org.uk/castle-drogo)

Shaftesbury Snowdrops, [info@shaftesburysnowdrops.org](mailto:info@shaftesburysnowdrops.org)

Batsford arboretum and Garden Centre at Morton-in-the-Marsh,

Cerney House Gardens, North Cerney, Cirencester.

Colesbourne Park on [info@colesbournegardens.org.uk](mailto:info@colesbournegardens.org.uk) to be found between Cheltenham and Cirencester.



# Words

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## A Golfer's Story

An elderly couple were having dinner one evening when the husband reached across the table, took his wife's hand in his and said, "Martha, soon we will be married 50 years, and there's something I have to know. In all of these 50 years, have you ever been unfaithful to me?"

Martha replied, "Well Henry, I have to be honest with you. Yes, I've been unfaithful to you on three occasions during these 50 years, but always for a good reason.

Henry was obviously hurt by his wife's confession, but said, "I never suspected. Can you tell me what you mean by 'good reasons?' "Martha said, "The first time was shortly after we were married, and we were about to lose our little house because we couldn't pay the mortgage. Do you remember that evening I went to see the banker and the next day he notified you that the loan would be extended?" Henry recalled the visit to the banker and said, "I can forgive you for that. You saved our home, but what about the second time?"

Martha asked, "Do you remember when you were so sick, but we didn't have the money to pay for the heart surgery you needed? Well, I went to see your doctor one night and, if you recall, he did the surgery at no charge." "I recall that," said Henry. "And you did it to save my life, so of course I can forgive you for that. Now tell me about the third time."

"All right," Martha said. "So do you remember when you ran for president of your golf club, and you needed 53 more votes?"



# Words

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**V**itamin F this is so true!!!!

I loved this and wanted to share it with you...

Why do I have a variety of friends who are all so different in character?

How is it possible that I can get along with them all? I think that each one helps to bring out a "different" part of me.

With one of them I am polite. With another I joke.

I can sit down and talk about serious matters with one.

With another I laugh a lot. I listen to one friend's problems.

Then I listen to another one's advice for me.

My friends are like pieces of a jigsaw puzzle. When completed, they form a treasure box. A treasure of friends!

They are my friends who understand me better than I understand myself.

They're friends who support me through good days and bad.

Friends are good for our health. Dr. Oz calls them Vitamin (F for Friends) and counts the benefits of friends as essential to our well being.

Research shows that people in strong social circles have less risk of depression and terminal strokes.

If you enjoy Vitamin F constantly you can be up to 30 years younger than your real age.

The warmth of friendship stops stress and even in your most intense moments, it decreases the chance of a cardiac arrest or stroke by 50%.

I'm so happy that I have a stock of Vitamin F!

In summary, we should value our friends and keep in touch with them.

We should try to see the funny side of things and laugh together and pray for each other in the tough moments.

Some of my friends are friends on line. I know I am part of theirs because their names appear on my computer screen every day and I feel blessed that they care as much for me as I care for them. *Thank you for being one of my vitamins!*



# GayWest History Month

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**T**his year there will be a series of talks at “The Rainbow Café” on the history of our group. This will be presented by a different GayWest member each week during February.

**Saturday 3rd** The Early Years 1970 - 1983

This week our presentation will be given by Robert Howes who will talk about the beginnings of the group, how it came about and how it was setup and it's development from the early 70's to setting up the first “Rainbow Café”.

**Saturday 10th** 1983 - 1994

This Saturday our presentation will be by James Whatmore who will talk about the times from the beginning of the “Rainbow Café” through to the mid-nineties , giving his own personal views along the way.

**Saturday 17th** 1994 - 2006   **Saturday 24th** 2006 -2018

On these days Colin will take you from the nineties through into the 21st century and into the present day, with some of his personal insights and a look into the future

Each Saturday we will have our history display boards showing you a collection of archive materials covering the 47 years of the group's history. Each talk will be from 11.45am for about 15 minutes.

Colin 07758810134   **Sunday 25th**

**Bath Gay History Walk** by Robert Howes

To meet at 2pm by the War Memorial outside Victoria Park.

# Entertainment

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**The Bristol Hippodrome programme is out for**

December 2017 to March 2018

There is a wide range from Ballet, Drama, musicals, and Concerts.

**Matthew Bourne's Cinderella** 20th—24th March 2018 for those who like his interpretations with his modern dance, with Prokofiev's magnificent score. So do not be disappointed—book early.



**GayWest Social Evenings** Second Wednesday of each month  
10th January and 14th February etc.at **The Old Market Tavern** in  
Old Market Street, Bristol.



## **The GayWest Website....**

We have recently been in discussions with Newicon our internet provider, since they have sorted out the Domain problems we thought that it would be a good idea if we could get an easier way for our members to access their way into the Website.

This is underway and we will let you know the outcome and the future changes that are made.

Colin





**Christmas Dinner 2017**