



GayWest Journal
For March and April 2018
£2.00 for non-members



Features

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

Chair's Blog

Welcome all to the approaching spring weather when we can once again hobble about all over the place enjoying the longer warmer days.

Last month I spent a lot of time going over GayWest's history and in doing so, looking through the magazines over this long period, noticed how history seems to repeat itself in various forms in sometimes such short periods. Looking beyond our group you may have all read in the news about how some would like certain history erased, unfortunately this is impossible to do. There are three areas that we all live through, the past (our own history) the present (where we are now) and the future. If we had a time machine we could probably go back to our past history as we have travelled through it. I is logged into the light years that have travelled in space time that we have travelled in our life. There will be photos, memories and stories of this past kept in its time related place in the passage of time logged into our time line.

The present we are now living in, thinking in, enduring, enjoying, it's all happening now. But the future we can only make predictions about. We can speculate, but we have no control, only some ideas or possibilities for the future i not yet available. We have not travelled along with the traveling light yet, but our future will be our history tomorrow. And it will be recorded for ever and can never be erased.

Of course, we can learn from our history, learn maybe not to make the same mistakes again, but the next generation can only know of the mistakes we have made by listening and learning about them so to be able to make the changes for a better future.

Colin.

See the article ***Gay life in...Page 12***

GayWest History — Report

GayWest is a LGBT social and support group based in Bristol and Bath.

It can trace its origins back to April 1970, when the Bristol Group of the Campaign for Homosexual Equality (CHE Bristol) was founded. The other founding organisation was Bath Gay Awareness Group (BGAG), which was set up in autumn 1971. Both groups had a campaigning function, organising events to highlight the legal and social discrimination to which LGBT people were subject.

The groups held regular meetings of their members, invited outside speakers and wrote to MPs and councillors to try to get them to support changes in the law to remove some of the anomalies left by the 1967 Sexual Offences Act, which partially decriminalised male homosexuality. Bristol CHE was also active in raising the question of employment rights.

In 1982, CHE restructured itself and the Bath group changed its name to Gay West, aiming to become a more social group but still involved in political activism. Early the following year, CHE Bristol merged with Gay West, which since then has covered the area of the old county of Avon (Bristol, Bath and surrounding areas). In the 1980s, it had a very active social programme, with events on most nights of the week, and membership increased rapidly, reaching a peak of over 400 in 1992, of which around a third were women.

Gay West gave support and a sense of respect at a time when gay people felt under attack from vicious headlines in the tabloid press over the HIV/AIDS epidemic and the government's Section 28, which tried to prevent local authorities from taking positive measures towards LGBT people in education and other facilities.

The group made great efforts to reach out to the local community and in return received support from other people and organisations.

GayWest History – Report

In the 1990s, public opinion began to change and a more balanced debate emerged nationally. As more attractive commercial venues and social and sports organisations catering for LGBT people appeared locally, the need for Gay West diminished and the number of members gradually fell.

Membership stabilised around 80-90 in the early 2000s and since then Gay West has continued to thrive. Its main activity is a coffee shop, now known as the Rainbow Café, which has operated in the centre of Bath every Saturday morning since 1983. The café is run by volunteers and is open to everyone. Around 30 people usually come and it is a place where lasting friendships have been made.

The group has an active website and issues a regular newsletter or magazine. It also organises occasional events such as the Christmas dinner – the highlight of the year – picnics and outings for its members. Robert Howes

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

GayWest Social Evenings Second Wednesday of each month 14th March and 11th April etc.

at **The Old Market Tavern** in Old Market Street, Bristol.



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



Weston-S-Mare Rainbow Café

The Café is no longer at the Cameo bar but we have been informed a new one is being launched on the 10th of March details when we have them.



All GayWest Post to :-

30, Woodpecker Close,

Keynsham, BRISTOL. BS31 2FU

Tel:- 0775 881 0134 or 0785 433 6047

Info@gaywest.org.uk **You can now pay by Credit/Debit Card**

Official Notices

The Committee wants its members to get the most out of this unique organisation that will now be into its forty-eighth year, but it needs you as members to get involved, in any way that you can, so Gaywest can continue into the next decade. Since I mentioned this in the last Journal, some of you have kindly come forward to help out on occasions when we need help, such as when we are unable to be at the Café. The GayWest Picnic will now go ahead as Philip Cawte has kindly offered to arrange this event which will be in August. ***But we need you on the Committee, come on do not be shy it is very rewarding.*** ***You can contact me on 07758810134*** Colin.



The GayWest Website....

Early in February Jim and myself paid a visit to Newicon's new offices in Welsh Back, Bristol. The reason was to see how things were going with the changes that we are having to make to our Website due to reasons beyond our control. The changes will make the site more easy to manage for us and better access for all of our members. I hope to have more information in the next Journal, but we hope it will be all up and running by April. So watch this space.

Colin



St. Mary Redcliffe

This is an Anglican parish church located in the parish of Redcliffe Bristol: It is near Temple Meads station.

The spire height is 292 feet and is the third tallest of all parish churches.

Parts of the Gothic style church date from the 12th century, and plans still exist showing actual dating of 1292 and 1370.

In 1446 much of the interior was damaged when lightning struck the spire and 400 years passed before the damage was repaired, this was overseen by George Goodwin.

During the reformation in the 17th century, many of the church fittings and stain glass windows were destroyed.

During the ensuing reign of Elizabeth 1st, she partially funded repair work and the interior was refitted in the Baroque style.

She is quoted as saying "The fairest, goodliest and most famous parish church in England".

Patrons associated with St Mary include:

Simon de Burton; William I Canynge; Sir William Penn; Mr William Spenser; Mr John Cabot; Mr Jay; Mr Ameryk; and Mr Mede.

Thomas Chatterton (who was born locally in 1752) was a boy poet known to have faked some "medieval" documents, and as a result, committed suicide. A room above the north porch is dedicated to his memory.

One of the most impressive features of St Mary is the vaulted north porch, decorated with black Purbeck Marble columns.

There are two fonts: one is 13th century: the other is of Marble and dates from 1755, design by William Paty. The Oak pulpit was built in the 19th century by William Bennett. There is a wrought Iron gilded chancel screen built in 1710 by William Edney, and which still stands today.

St. Mary Redcliffe

In the tower there are 15 bells, the earliest dating from 1622. The clock on the north elevation of the tower is nine feet across, and the original mechanism was converted to electric operation during the 1960s.

The first pipe organ was built in 1726 by Harris and Byfield: in 1912 a 71-stop, with over 4300 pipes, was incorporated and remains much in use today. In 2010 it underwent an overhaul costing £800,000. The organists are Claire Alsop and Graham Alsop.

There is much more to learn about St Mary and if planning a visit, do allow at least half a day to explore and appreciate this truly magnificent building. Valentino 1/18

Two drag queens are set to feature in ground-breaking new adverts from Kellogg's.

Vivienne Lynsey and Miss Blair, from Manchester, will be in two adverts talking about when to eat cornflakes – and how many clothes they wear while doing it. Vivienne, who was a finalist for RuPaul's Drag Race UK Ambassador in 2015, said he preferred to eat a bowl "at night-time." Miss Blair agreed saying he likes having Cornflakes "around 1 am" though he added that he favoured wearing "lounge pants and a Kaftan" while doing it.

Vivienne hailed the landmark nature of the ads.

Wilton's Music Hall

On a visit to London during December last, I used a free morning to do some exploring: a number 15 bus took me to Aldgate East underground station, then I walked for ten minutes down Leaman Street as far as Ensign Street. My destination was clearly signposted: WILTON'S MUSIC HALL, and access was along a passageway over which hung very large lanterns.



The Hall was built in 1858 by John Wilton who envisaged a Grand Music Hall and it proved a huge success. But by 1880 new fire regulations marked its demise and the hall was closed down: it re-opened as a Methodist Mission Hall until the

1950's.

After they moved out, the building became derelict and was under threat of demolition. However, the Wilton Hall Trust was formed and the hall has since been brought sensitively back to life. Nowadays it is used as a theatre, cinema and a multi-media arts centre.

Inside I glimpsed sight of renovated brickwork, a vintage ticket office, bars and passageways with stairs leading to the auditorium. I plan, in the foreseeable future, to return for a performance and to partake in a tour of this secret and historical entertainment venue. Pictured is a three-dimensional diorama (published by Pollocks) which I bought on the day. Valentino 1/18



The Princes Theatre

Research shows that the Princes Theatre in Park Row, Bristol stood on what is now occupied by an Esso petrol station:

On the night of 24/11/1940 Bristol was heavily bombed and the theatre took a direct hit and was totally blitzed. On the opposite side of the road was the Circus of Varieties (corner of Woodland Road) which was also blitzed, but its facade still exists today – fronting part of the University of Bristol.

The theatre had a fascinating history and was originally called The New Royal Theatre, being built in 1867 by Davis & Sons for Mr J H Chute who owned the Theatre Royal in King Street in



Bristol. Building costs for the Princes are recorded as £17,000 and it took six months to complete. It seated over 2,000 people with 800 in the stalls, 700 in the circle and 500 in the gallery.

The audience were able to enjoy a host of spectacular shows, musicals, operettas, plays and pantomimes in a purposefully built theatre with a beautifully designed and ornate auditorium.

Original programmes, posters, brochures, photographs and cast lists still exist, but today all trace of the theatre has disappeared: a nearby high-rise block of flats bears the name Terry House, in recognition of Ellen Terry who appeared at the original Theatre Royal in 1862. Valentino 2/18



A Gay Life In.....

Chile

Chile has come a long way since the dark days of the oppressive Pinochet years. In just a few decades, the country has quickly evolved to having major gay events, a strong Queer Culture and is now on its way to passing marriage equality laws.

Peru

Peru has historically been a very Conservative Society and quite hostile to its L.G.B.T community, there are no laws in place for gay couples to enter into civil unions, let alone marriage.

On Valentines day in 2016, there was an event held, called "Kisses against Homophobia" but it was brutally and violently interrupted by the police. However, fast forward a year and there is hope for change. more Peruvian politicians are slowly coming out to support the L.G.B.T community. In January this year the President issued a decree prohibiting all forms of discrimination and hate crimes on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. Very slowly Peru is evolving and getting ready to take her place in the "Pink Limelight."

Argentina

It was the first country in Latin America to legalise gay marriage in July 2010, which also included full adoption rights. This made it the 2nd in the entire continent (after Canada) and 10th in the world. The right to change legal gender has been in place since 2012 and in the same year, legislation was introduced adding life imprisonment to hate crimes based on sexual orientation, gender identity or expression.

More in future editions.....

Joke of the day

On a crowded train, travelling somewhere in Europe, a U.S. Marine walked the entire length of the train looking for a seat before realising that the only seat available was currently occupied by a well-dressed, middle-aged French woman's poodle. The weary Marine asked, "Ma'am, may I have that seat?"

The French woman just sniffed, and said to no one in particular, "Americans are so rude. My little Fifi is using that seat. The Marine walked the entire length of the train again, and discovered that the only seat available was in fact the one currently being occupied by the poodle.

Trudging tiredly back, the marine arrived once more before the French woman and said, "Please Ma'am, may I sit down? I'm very tired?"

She snorted, "Not only are you Americans rude, you are also arrogant. Why should I care if you are tired?" This time, the Marine didn't say a word, but simply picked up the little dog, tossed it out the train window, then sat down.

The woman shrieked, "Someone, defend my honour! This American needs to be put in his place!"

An English gentleman sitting nearby spoke up,

"Sir, you Americans seem to have a penchant for doing the wrong thing. You hold your fork in the wrong hand and you drive your cars on the wrong side of the road. And now, sir, you seem to have thrown the wrong bitch out the window."



Press Cuttings

Equal Marriage in Bermuda

Although the UK technically has a veto over legislation that it deems to contradict human rights, the green light was given to sign a new law, which abolishes same sex marriages and replaces them with a segregated form of partnerships for Gay couples. This will take place after only a year since same sex Marriages were allowed.

Laws can be repealed, so worrying news.

Sir Ian McKellen

Came out of the closet in 1988, recently he has said he believes young people will no longer have to even label their sexuality because 'fluidity is the future'.

The veteran actor welcomed society becoming more relaxed and accepting of sexuality and that youngsters no longer feel they have to identify as gay, straight or bisexual.

Speaking on Radio 4's Today programme he added I think that's terribly hopeful. I think the world will be changing beautifully and people will be more relaxed and accepting, that's what I am picking up from our younger generation.

They don't want to be labelled lesbian, they don't to be labelled bisexual they don't want to be labelled anything....fluidity is the future.



Bristol Pride will this year be on Saturday 14th July and this time will not clash with London Pride as it has in past years.

Weston—S—Mare Pride will be a two day event over the weekend of 28th/29th August.

For more information go to www.pinkuk.com.

Entertainment

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.



During December of last year I received a rather special bear to add to my collection: he had travelled by motorcar with friends from Cumbria (Grange-over-Sands).

Because of his fragility, he had been wrapped in many layers of protective packaging – all of which were inside a most decorative and festive outer wrap. Intrigued, I opened up the parcel and found a most delightful teddy bear: standing about 7" high, he was made in England from resin and beautifully hand – crafted and wearing a red silk bowtie. The manufacturer's label was attached.



Because of the glitter-coat I named him GARY and he now adorns my mantelpiece along with a row of assorted but smart and colourful nutcracker pieces. Yes, Christmas can bring a lot of pleasure

(A collector of Teddy Bears is an ARCTOPHILE).





Get in the swim with GayWest