

GayWest Newsletter - September Edition 2024

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Chair's Blog

I've only once been on a motorbike. I clung to the biker's jacket, with eyes tight shut, all the way from Golders Green to Temple Fortune in north London. We were very young. The biker, Malcolm, thought he was James Dean and was going through that 'showing-off-to-the-girls' phase. I was only on the bike for less than ten minutes but they had to prise me off, still in the sitting position, like a bent hairpin. Apparently, I was gibbering with fright.

Strange then that I should have this lifelong yearning for a Harley-Davidson motorbike. Nothing came of it, of course, but I've now found one on show at the current exhibition at the American Museum. It's a Harley-Davidson Duo-Glide, 1958 (more about the exhibition on page 2).

For those members who are bikers, and I believe we have one or two, there's a quote from the exhibition that might resonate with you: *"Seated on a motorcycle, you feel every change in temperature, every turn in the road, and every gust of wind across your entire body. It's no wonder so many people choose to cruise the open road on ... a Harley-Davidson. It symbolises freedom and individuality"*. For the rest of us who haven't gone down that road - we can dream, can't we.

The only other excitement I can offer you is that we have an AGM on Saturday, 28 September at the Cafe at 11.00 am. It's a time to voice your thoughts and to put forward who you want on your committee. Nomination forms are attached with this newsletter and also available at the Cafe.

Michael Reid

American Road Trip - Exhibition

There have been a few changes at the American Museum above Claverton since I was last there. The gardens have been developed in colourful ways with new plantings and a woodland walkway opened behind the Exhibition Gallery.

I went to see the American Road Trip exhibition. Living in England, we forget just how vast the distances are in the USA, and you really do need to plan your trip on the road.



It's a small exhibition, with old travel posters and items from the 1950's. Lighting is rather low but it is well worth going to see. www.americannuseum.org

Michael Reid

Hello Dolly !

On a very hot Wednesday during July, we travelled by train to Paddington, and then on to the London Palladium Theatre. This was our first visit to the capital in three years, so there was much to be aware of. We had matinee tickets for a newly opened production of *Hello Dolly*, and in the lead part was Imelda Staunton whom we greatly admired from seeing in previous stage shows and in films.



In this musical she played Dolly Levi, a widow match-making for everyone else until she realises that it's her turn to find a husband, cue for an emotive song:
"Till the Parade Passes By"

This show has everything and more that one would expect from a West End production, including good acting, the singing of many wonderful songs, cleverly-animated scenery, including a full size steam locomotive and a passenger-carrying tram !

There was also lots of energetic dancing and much humour, plus a measure of pathos. I counted an on-stage cast of forty actors. In spite of the hot weather the performance was sold out, and we were grateful that the theatre had full air conditioning (hallelujah!)

Afterwards we returned to Paddington to await our train, and we were pleased to find seats on the concourse and enjoyed sandwiches and very cold drinks.

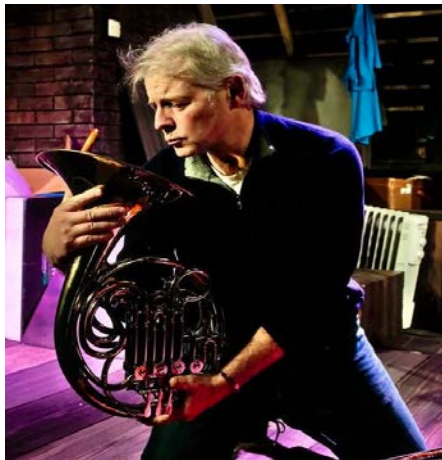
Valentino

For all you car drivers



In a car you're always in a compartment, and because you're used to it you don't realise that through that car window everything you see is just more TV.

Robert Pirzig
*Zen and the Art of Motorcycle
Maintenance, 1974*



I Found My Horn

at the Theatre Royal Bath
25 October at 7.30 pm
26 October at 9.30 pm

Adapted from the best-selling book
By Jasper Rees -
And performed by Jourden Guy
Lewis

**GayWest's Monthly Social
at the Lodekka in Brislington
Good food & good company
Wednesday 11 September from 7.30pm
easy bus service back to Bath !**

Spring Promise - from Stephen: www.gardening-coach.co.uk or email to: gardencoach2022@gmail.com



As the last embers of summer begin to fade into autumn, our gardens start to die back. We turn our attention to spring and how to cheer our gardens up after the long dark winter's days and nights.

Our garden centres, nurseries, and publications like newspapers and gardening magazines, come awash with many mind-boggling deals on spring bulbs throughout September, October and November. I've been buying bulbs by mail order for years now, and my bulb catalogues come through the post in July.

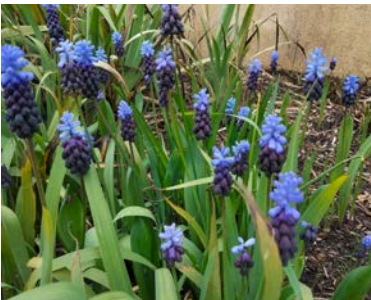


There is a huge array of bulbs available, Narcissus and tulips being probably the most popular. However, there are many others that make enjoyable displays in our gardens. Such as Allium, Anemone, Chionodoxa, Eranthis, Fritillaria, Iris, Muscari to mention just a few. These will give you flowers right the way from January to May.

When planting bulbs in your garden as a rule of thumb the bulbs are normally planted 2x depth of the bulb (size). However, with daffodils and tulips they can be planted deeper. You can plant bulbs any time provided the ground is not frozen and definitely before the end of November.



You can also make a spectacular display of bulbs if you either plant individual ones in pots or layer up different varieties in one pot. Use a mix of multi-purpose compost and soil-based compost (John Innes no2/3) to give your pots weight and free draining substrate. Whatever way you choose to plant your bulbs, enjoy a stunning display in the coming spring.



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The **GayWest Picnic** was held in the Italian Garden just inside Henrietta Gardens. We had a lovely, relaxing time and the weather - thankfully - behaved itself.



Bath Pride 2024



Bath Pride and March 2024 took place on an afternoon of hazy sunshine on Sunday 18 August. The first Bath Pride March occurred in 2017 and a small contingent of Gay West members went on the second March in 2018. Previous marches had been tacked onto the annual Bath Carnival Parade but this year's Pride was a stand-alone event.

The March started at the Rec and proceeded along Great Pulteney Street, over Pulteney Bridge, past the Abbey, then along Cheap Street, Union Street, Upper Borough Walls, back over the bridge again and along the length of Great Pulteney Street, ending with a picnic and stalls of local organisations in the grounds of the Holburne Museum. There was to be a party in the evening.

The March passed many of Bath's most iconic landmarks, making for some good photo opportunities. The participants were mainly young but there were a few from the other end of the age spectrum. A few drag queens and some fetishists but most people were in civvies, decked out with Rainbow and Trans-Pride flags. Some banners reminded onlookers that Pride is a protest as well as a celebration.

There was a small police presence but the March went off in perfect order and good humour. It was later featured on BBC Points West. Holding the March in August meant that many students were away on vacation but there was still a good turn-out and it proved that a stand-alone event is viable in Bath. Let's hope that it becomes an annual fixture!

Robert Howes



GayWest's Annual General Meeting (AGM)

will be held at the Rainbow Cafe on Saturday 28 September at 11.00 am

Nomination Papers are attached with your September Newsletter or available at the Cafe.

How to dream !

