

# QB

## Nottinghamshire's Queer Bulletin

February/March 2008  
Number 40

In this edition:

We will not be giving away leather binders, so you will have to buy your own to house our utterly fantabulosa series of **Gay Nottingham Times**, which starts in this edition of QB. **Gay Nottingham Times** is produced by local historian Tony Bilton and each episode looks at a different aspect of LGBT Nottinghamshire.

Tony is a member of the Nottinghamshire's Rainbow Heritage project and the development of Gay Nottingham Times will form part of the project.

If you have any information, news, gossip or libel, please send it to

QB  
Lesbian and Gay Switchboard  
7 Mansfield Road  
Nottingham NG1 3FB

or e-mail

notts@lgswitchboard.fsnet.co.uk

The deadline for the next edition will be mid March 2008.

**Switchboard is registered charity number 1114273**

This edition of QB is sponsored by **Something Social**. They presented a stupendous cheque for £1022 to Switchboard at the Sunday Social meeting on December 2nd.

## LOTTERY GRANT FOR LGBT HISTORY PROJECT

**FREE**

A phone call on December 13th announced that the proposed LGBT history project "**Nottinghamshire's Rainbow Heritage**" will get a grant of £40,600 from the Heritage Lottery fund.

This is a three year project with both on-going activities (such as recording local people's oral histories) and events organised for specific times i.e. for Pride and for LGBT History Month each February. The events for this February are listed below and in the Diary section. The award of the grant means that the late session at the View from the Top on Feb. 12th will be a launch for the whole project as well as the exhibition.

One feature of the project's timetable was that it would provide news about its progress and examples of what it is doing for each edition of QB over the next three years .... *starting right now*.

### EVENTS FOR LGBT HISTORY MONTH

Tuesday Feb.12th to Sunday Feb.17th **LGBT History Exhibition** at View from the Top (top floor of Waterstones) open during normal shop hours, except on **Tuesday 12th**, when there will be a "launch" with food and drink (free!!) between 7 and 9 pm. The exhibition includes features



such as: 10 year's of Nottingham Pride; Gay men in the Holocaust; Pink Professions (from Architect to Scientist via Cartoon and Serial Killer); 600 LGBT faces; Nottingham's gay venues; Homophobia and a lot more.

Friday February 15th "**The Gay Man's Guide**" a play by local actor/author Paul Strickland at the Lace Market Theatre. The play was successfully premiered in London last Summer ... see Diary section for full details ... and be quick - tickets are selling fast.

Wednesday February 20th An illustrated presentation about **CHE (the Campaign for Homosexual Equality) in 1970s Nottingham** .... Including: CHE invents "the only gay in the village"; Green Noses; teaching about homosexuality in schools; Councillor Wright - gay, but not queer; what happened to Major Oak ... and more. Venue: 7 Mansfield Road (over the road from The House of Fraser). Free entrance. There will be a display, plus food and drink from 7.15 pm and the presentation starts promptly at 8.00 pm.

Tuesday February 26th An **LGBT History Pub Quiz** night in the Green Room (basement) of the Lord Roberts starting, fairly promptly at 8.00 pm. As there will be prizes and some food provided, there will be a charge of £1 for entrance.

Monday Feb. 18th to Friday Feb. 30th Part of the LGBT exhibition including the "lesbian and gay" cartoons - see above - moves to the display area at **Central Library**, Angel Row (first floor).

## BRIEFS ON AND OFF THE SCENE

**Fagged Out**, a monthly gay, bi, gay-friendly party in The Basement (Rock City). Friday February 8th. 9pm to 3am

**Bears in the Forest** have stopped their monthly meetings at the Lord Roberts

**LIRAIN** (Lesbians into real ale in Nottingham) Lirain is a group of lesbian and bi women who get together, drink fine ales and chat. Get togethers are informal and there is a yahoo chat group. To find out more, join the yahoo group at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/lirain>

**Something Social** will cease to exist as a combined network of social groups, but the individual groups will still continue. Adam Woods, who started Something Social, has found that a) since he moved to Taunton and b) since the demands of his work increased, it has become practically impossible to coordinate Something Social. The people on the e-mail lists for Eat-Out, Arts, Tardis, Badminton, Real Ale and Book socials will still get information. Events, dates etc will be published on the [www.gaynottingham.com](http://www.gaynottingham.com) website and via Switchboard.

@D2 seems to have closed.

## PLAY YOUR PART WITH PRIDE

Following the phenomenal success of last year's Pride the organising committee has reassembled and are straining at the leash to get 2008's Pride ready. Even at this early stage new and exciting ideas are being developed, including one which will take place over the whole of Pride week. Sadly, some of the previous committee have moved away or have other commitments this year, so there is plenty of opportunity for anyone to get involved and bring new ideas and talents.

With **Pride 2008** looking like being even bigger than ever, now is the time to become part of the most exciting Pride in the Midlands. Volunteers are needed in all areas - and especially on Pride day itself. Last year's volunteers were the heroes of Pride, and we encourage anyone, regardless of age, sexuality, ability or experience, to come forward. We also look forward to seeing previous volunteers.

Log on to the website [www.nottinghampride.co.uk](http://www.nottinghampride.co.uk) and the committee chairman or volunteer coordinator will contact you in due course. Being part of Nottingham Pride is something to be proud of.

## TRANS-ACTION

**Trans-Action** offers practical help and support for all trans-folk and their families in and around Nottingham. Trans-Action works with the police, city council and local authorities, victim support, the domestic violence unit and many other local and government bodies... helping you to help yourself and ensuring a better delivery of services to transgendered people. You can contact us via the NLG Switchboard (0115 934 8485)... Just tell the person who takes your call why you need Trans-Action and they will put you in contact with us.

We act as a conduit for your problems and provide anonymity whilst getting action on the matters that affect you. Whatever problems you are having – we want to hear about them so we can try to make our city a better place to be transgendered.

Helping trans-folk to help themselves



**News...** For the last 4 years, Jenna has been running the organisation single-handedly, and with very little funding. So, I'm pleased to be able to tell you that Tricia Moores and Radcliffe Gregory have now joined the committee and this will make a huge difference to help and support that we can offer to the trans community of the East Midlands and the wider area covered by Nottingham GIC.

### The BIG survey

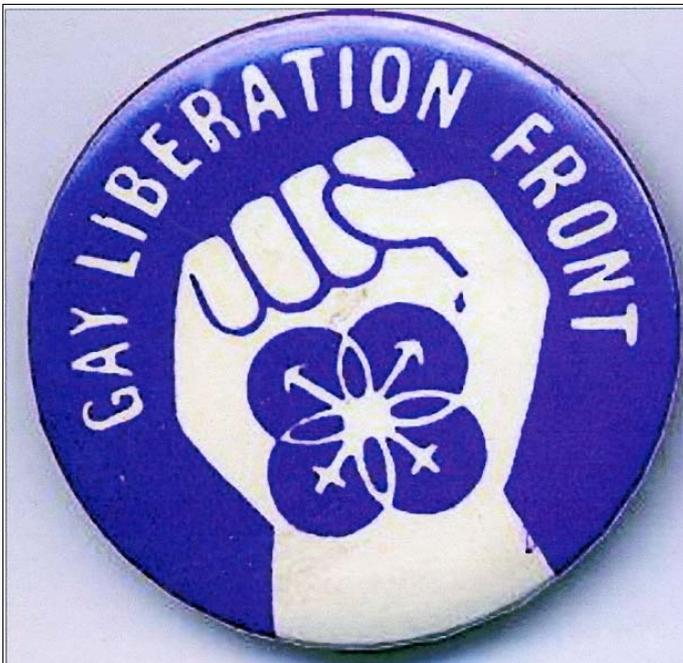
So we can best represent the needs of all sections of the Trans community, we need some accurate statistics, so please visit our website and complete the online questionnaire. If you can't get online, then call NLGS Switchboard and they will take your information.

Recently, Jenna met with Mandy Pride, from Nottingham City Council to discuss ways in which the council can help and support Trans-Action in service provision to the local transgender community. As a result of this meeting, I am excited to be able to announce that we are now taking the first steps toward the establishment of a drop-in centre for trans-people, their friends and families– the first in the UK. Check the website for the latest news!

*The quarterly newsletter, now in its 6<sup>th</sup> year, has now been expanded to 8 pages and the next edition will be issued on February 28th 2007. If you wish to contribute, all letters and articles need to reach us by the 14<sup>th</sup> February deadline.*

From January 2008, the new URL for Trans-Action is <http://www.electrabeauty.com/trans-action>. Please make sure you email [trans-action@clara.co.uk](mailto:trans-action@clara.co.uk) with "Mailing List" in the subject box and you will be kept bang up-to-date with all the latest developments and also receive the newsletters.





The **Gay Liberation Front** (GLF) was formed in New York in 1969 shortly before the Stonewall riots - a series of violent conflicts between the police and LGBT people in New York. The UK Gay Liberation Front first met in 1970.

GLF often used deliberately spectacular and visually conspicuous forms of direct action. When GLF made headlines, gay issues entered the public agenda. In 1971 they staged an alternative pageant in support of Women's Liberation outside the Miss World contest featuring "Miss Used", "Miss Conceived" and "Miss Treated". At an event organised by the evangelical Christian group, The Festival of Light, they dressed as nuns, released quantities of white mice and did the conga down the church's aisle.

In Nottingham, GLF joined with CHE to produce 2 examples of Gay Street Theatre - "Green Noses" and "Robina Hood and her Merry Men".



In 1977 **Mary Whitehouse**, anti-porn campaigner and Dame Edna Everage look-a-like, revived the offence of blasphemous libel to prosecute Gay News. The law had last been used in 1921 and had been presumed to be a dead letter. (Her successors are trying, with less success, to use the same law against "Jerry Springer, the Opera")

She objected to a poem and illustration in Gay News about a gay Roman centurion's love for Christ at the Crucifixion.

During the six day trial, columnist and TV personality Bernard Levin and Novelist Margaret Drabble testified that Gay News was a responsible paper that did not encourage illegal sexual practices. Editor Denis Lemon was convicted and given a nine-month suspended jail sentence and had to pay a £500 fine. Gay News reckoned that the case brought them publicity worth well over £1 million.



The "Clause" was "**Clause 28**", later enacted as Section 28 of the Local Government Act of 1988. It introduced one of the most patronising of legal phrases into British law ... "A local authority shall not promote the teaching in any maintained school of the acceptability of homosexuality as a *pretended family relationship*".

The notorious air-head, Dame Jill Knight, who helped push the bill through parliament seemed oblivious of the fact that her government were simultaneously taking schools out of the control of local authorities, so they had no say in what schools did about homosexuality. The problem with Section 28 was not what it said, but what people thought it said.

Perhaps the Conservative government should have considered allowing same-sex couples to pay pretend taxes.

# Gay Nottingham Times

**No. 1** Claiming our history, Celebrating our present, Creating our future

lesbian  
gay  
bisexual  
trans  
**history  
month**  
2007

The first Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender History Month was in 2005, following the pattern of the US Gay History Month founded in 1994. Section 28 (banning the promotion of LGBT issues) was the reason why it took so long to catch on in the UK.

## Sex, lives and videotape

(Nottingham Evening Post headline regarding the Out House History Project)

The first major move to create a record of Nottinghamshire's LGBT history was made by the Out House Project.



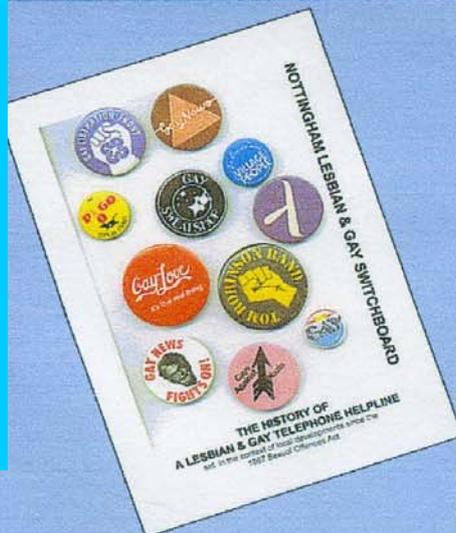
**Millennium  
Festival  
History Project**

With funding from the National Lottery, Out House set up the Millennium Festival History Project in 1999.



On 15 April 2000, a History Day was held at the YMCA. Even though the Day was a success, there was a homophobic protest by the British National Party.

In 2007 a group of people from LGBT and other local communities successfully applied to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a grant to set up a 3-year project bearing the name on their logo shown below.



2000 also saw the first history of gay Nottingham in print, concentrating on the Lesbian and Gay Switchboard, by David Edgley. This was also made possible with National Lottery funding and from the Nottinghamshire Living History Archive Millennium Award Scheme. David's book, still the only printed history, covered comprehensively for the first time gay life in Nottingham from 1967. It contained reminiscences from gays and lesbians which were recorded onto CDs. The Switchboard history project is ongoing.

In July 2006, a new service providing guided tours of gay Nottingham, called Pegasus Tours, was launched. These tours are available to all sexualities, and joins just a handful of cities in the UK that offer gay history tours, revealing the secrets and stories that have long been forgotten, or never before heard.



## THE POLICE AND US - THEN

Before 1967 the law said that sex between men was a crime worthy of imprisonment and that it was the job of the police to enforce that law. Some members of the police did the enforcing with more enthusiasm than others. It is therefore understandable that there is a history of mistrust of the police amongst the LGB community.

The 1967 Sexual Offences Act did not make an immediate difference in the attitude of many police forces. After 1967 arrests for gay "sex offences" actually rose. Some of these arrests were a direct consequence of anomalies in the 1967 Act i.e. men were arrested because they were having sex with someone who was 19 or 20, or because they had contravened the weird definition of privacy used in the Act.

There was also the paradox that having sex as "consenting male adults in private" was OK, but the process leading up to the sex could still be a crime. This was because "chatting up" someone in a gay bar could be interpreted as "soliciting for immoral purposes". The latter offence meant that in the 1970s gay venues existed by the grace and favour of the local police force. This wasn't a problem in Nottingham, but in some parts of the country the police were heavy handed; there were instances where police noted the registration numbers of cars parked near gay venues and then went to the owners' homes and questioned them about their activities.

Arrests for cottaging were often obtained by devious means: "pretty police" would wave their willies at gay men and act as agent provocateurs; cameras would be installed in the ceilings of public lavatories. In 1985, research in Nottingham showed that police arrests for cottaging on Saturdays followed a peculiar pattern. Either no arrests or lots of arrests. The researcher eventually concluded that when Nottingham Forest were playing at home, the police went to the Forest ground - when Forest were playing away, the police trawled round the cottages.

Gay men and lesbians were arrested for causing a "breach of the peace" for kissing in public. This law was "mocked to death". Hundreds of lesbians and gay men informed the police that they were going along to Trafalgar Square, where, at an appointed time, the men would kiss the men and the women would kiss the women. The police were invited to arrest everyone.

As an aside, I will mention that in a school in North Nottinghamshire two female students have recently been suspended for holding hands.

## THE POLICE AND US - THEN

As an example of how not to work with the LGB community, "God's Copper" James Anderton, Chief Constable of Manchester in the 1980s, led the field.

"I see increasing evidence of people swirling about in a human cesspit of their own making... We must ask why homosexuals freely engage in obnoxious practices, knowing the dangers involved."



## THE POLICE AND US - NOW

From our current perspective it is quite amazing to see the distance the police have travelled in the last few years. We now have a situation where Staffordshire Police Force is classed as the best employer for LGBT people in the UK.

I have a copy of an article written by a local woman who was the victim of homophobic harassment. Her car was scratched and daubed with paint and graffiti was written on the walls of her house. After contacting the police, she remarked that she could not have wished for more considerate or effective treatment .... but this article appeared in 1976.



There always has been "good practice" in how the police force works with us, but in 1976 "good practice" might have been the exception, whereas today we expect it .... and in most cases receive it.

Locally we have had a Police LGBT Consultation Group for over 8 years. Those who attend the group's meetings are happy to state that progress has been made in many areas. Examples include:

- ◆ Seeking LGBT community members for involvement in Police training
- ◆ Consulting us over press releases
- ◆ The establishment of an 0800 no. to report homophobic incidents and setting up a mechanism for third party reporting
- ◆ Providing regular analyses of reported homophobic crimes
- ◆ Taking action about inappropriate behaviour of bar staff towards Trans people
- ◆ Communicating to us where there are situations which might put the Community at risk
- ◆ Being seen to be involved in community activities such as the annual Pride Festival

## THIS IS YOUR LIFE

Now that **Nottinghamshire's Rainbow Heritage** project has been given the green light, we are looking for people who can contribute to the project. One of the ways in which you can do this is to have a look for memorabilia which relates to local venues and groups from the past.

Have you got any flyers, photos or other literature from venues such as

- ◆ The Pavilion Club
- ◆ Mario's/Shades
- ◆ Infinity/Eternity
- ◆ Cellos
- ◆ La Chic/Part II
- ◆ Kitsch/Casablanca
- ◆ De Luxe/Nero's

or from groups/organisations such as

- ◆ CHE/GLF
- ◆ Quest
- ◆ Lesbian Line
- ◆ GLYP
- ◆ Friend
- ◆ WAG
- ◆ The Lesbian Centre at the Women's Centre

If you have, and if you are prepared to let us make copies, then get in touch.

In the last few days several things have happened which help the progress of the project



The project now has a logo. Six logos were considered and put to the vote via our e-mail list of 40 people. Here's the winner (designed by Tony Bilton)

The project has located an office. We hope to move in on February 1st. The office is part of the Nottingham Voluntary Action Centre complex where many voluntary groups (including Women's Aid, Disabled People's Advocacy and Switchboard) are based. The address is

Nottinghamshire's Rainbow Heritage,  
NVAC,  
7 Mansfield Road,  
Nottingham NG1 3FB.

We don't yet know the phone number or final e-mail address, but as an interim measure we have set up a hotmail address, so you can now e-mail on

NottsRH@hotmail.co.uk

## QUOTE QUOTA

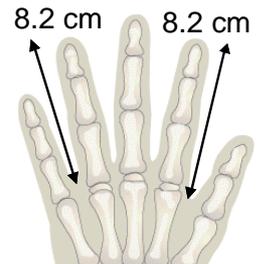
- ◆ If Michaelangelo had been straight, the Sistine Chapel would have been wallpapered (Robin Tyler)
- ◆ I have been a practicing homosexual for 30 years, and after all that practice I'm very good at it (Ike Cowen)
- ◆ It always seem to me pointless to disapprove of homosexuality; it's a bit like disapproving of rain (Francis Maude)
- ◆ My lesbianism is an act of Christian charity. All those women out there praying for a man and I'm giving them my share (Rita-Mae Brown)

## HOW TO SPOT A HOMO

QB has previously quoted from the 1964 Daily Sketch article named above. In the 1950's they also had some odd ideas.

Homosexuals:

- ◆ Are usually colour blind
- ◆ Cannot sing in unison
- ◆ Often flick their eyes up to the right to emphasize a point
- ◆ Never smoke pipes
- ◆ Use cigarette holders
- ◆ Always have index and third fingers of the same length



We have managed to obtain an X ray of Jeremy Clarkson's left hand. It is shown above.

## NOTES AND QUEERIES

Birds, bees, educated fleas ... they're all at it.

Crab-eating Macaque monkeys are nearly all bisexual. Unusually, they also sometimes have same sex contact with other species. They have been known to have sex with orang-utans ..... and even foxes.

Over 50% of courtships amongst dwarf cavies are of the same-sex variety. Females court each other by performing a rumba-like dance while slowing circling each other. They accompany this with a burbling sound known as "rumbling".

Female spotted hyenas have a seven inch clitoris .... which can be turned inside out.

About a quarter of all sexual activities in Humming Birds is between pairs of males. The proportion remains the same when the birds are presented with stuffed birds of both sexes. As they also have been known to try to mate with brightly coloured inanimate objects (e.g. small feather dusters), this does not say much for their powers of discrimination.

Lesbian & Gay Switchboard

0115 934 8485 or 01623 621515

Monday-Friday  
7-10pm

7 Mansfield Road, Nottingham, NG1 3FB.

notts@lgswitchboard.fsnet.co.uk

www.nottslgs.org.uk

www.nlgshistory.ik.com

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Healthy Gay Nottingham

(Formerly The GAI Project)

0115 947 6868

Monday-Friday  
daytimes

c/o The Health Shop, Broad Street,  
Nottingham NG1 3AL.

gaiproject@nottinghamcity-pct.nhs.uk

www.healthygaynottingham.org.uk

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Police Homophobic Crime  
Helpline

0800 085 8522

SOME LOCAL LISTINGS

- Breakout** Social group for gay & bisexual men. Tuesdays 7.30 pm (at the Health Shop) Contact Switchboard or GAI Project or go to www.breakoutnottm.org.uk
- Older Gay Men's Group** Support and social group for men aged 50+. Meets 3rd Sunday of month, 4 pm at the Health Shop. Contact GAI Project.
- Outburst!** Group for LGBT young people up to the age of 25. Meets every Monday at Base 51. Phone or text 07940 761160 (Davina) for details.
- Tipping The Velvet** A safe space for women who have sex with women 1st Monday of each month 5.30 - 8.00 pm at the Health Shop. Phone 0115 947 5414 for info

Details of the following groups can be obtained from Switchboard:

Nottingham Hyking Dykes; Notts Lesbian Book Club; Trans-Action (TV/TS); Women's Badminton; Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement; East Mercia MSC; the Chameleon Group; University of Nottingham & Trent University LGBT Societies; Peak Ruffties Women's Walking Group; Bi Delight; Griz-zly; Something Social; Notts Police OUTNetwork; Flying Colours; Nottingham Bi Women's Group; LiNk-Notts; LIFT; Lesbians in Ashfield Friendship & Support; North Notts Gay Women's Walking Group; Ball Bois gay football team; Sparta Women's Football; LGB Youth Groups in Worksop & Mansfield; Tagadere: Weekenders; Lesbian Writer's Network; East Midlands Gay Outdoor Club .... and, of course, S.H.A.G.G.E.R.S.

DIARY

THE ROYAL CENTRE



**Boy George** returns to the stage on Friday Feb 8th at the Royal Concert Hall with "Songs that make you dance and cry."

On Wednesday Feb. 8th Opera North brings its production of **Peter Grimes** to the Theatre Royal. This was voted the "Outstanding opera production of 2006" and returns with its original cast. The character of Grimes is reflected in Benjamin Britten's own position, when his status as a gay man in 1940s UK placed him, like Grimes, as the "outsider".

IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER

**Clare Summerskill** performs her totally brand new stage show, packed full of hilarious and thought-provoking stand-up, original songs and finely drawn comedy characters. Described as 'a lesbian Victoria Wood' by BBC Radio 4's Woman's Hour, Clare has even been known to make straight people chuckle just a little bit!

Saturday Mar. 22nd, 8pm at The Y, 7 East Street, Leicester, LE1 6EY. Tickets £10 (£8 concessions) ... for more details phone 0116 255 7066.

GAY MAN'S GUIDE

Civil partnerships. Queer coppers. Triple therapy. Sean in The Rovers. Gay men have never had it so good. Apparently.

**The Gay Man's Guide** is a new and revealing piece of verbatim theatre that seeks to discover what it means to be gay in Britain today. From playground to pension book, synagogue to sex shop, The Gay Man's Guide examines the lives of over fifty gay men using their own words.

*"It proves an unusual evening but a truly engaging, laugh out loud funny and provocative one."* **Phil Willmott, GAY.COM**

*"Where the material takes flight is in the way the experiences are juxtaposed... provides an interesting and thought provoking evening."* **Paul Woodward, Rainbow Network**

And now the Nottingham connection. The author of the Gay Man's Guide is **Paul Strickland**, who used to work at the Lace Market Theatre and was a volunteer for 7 years on Nottingham Switchboard. Some of the people whose words are used in the play are themselves from Nottingham. The play will be performed in a staged reading on Friday Feb. 15th 7.30 pm at the Lace Market Theatre. Tickets are £6-50 (£5-50 concessions). You can book online at www.lacemarkettheatre.co.uk