

QB

Nottinghamshire's Queer Bulletin

February /March 2006
Number 28

"History is bunk", said Henry Ford. Will this edition of QB prove him correct? We could not possibly comment.

In this edition alphabeticization

- **A**ggravation
- **B**lack and gay?
- **C**lubs, past and present
- **D**o lesbians exist?
- **E**li
- **F**lashbacks and **F**orums
- **G**roup of the day
- **H**eliogabolus
- (v)**I**ctim Support needs you
- **J**oyce Grenfell
- **K**hazi
- **L**ittle Britain
- **M**uch, **M**uch **M**ore

There's a £10 token for the first person correctly to name the 12 people on the front cover. Post or e-mail your answers (with contact details) to Switchboard.

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, 2006.

LGBT HISTORY MONTH

FREE

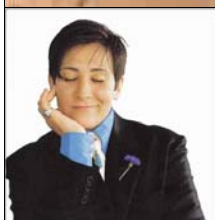
February 2006 is the second LGBT History Month and there are lots of things happening locally to celebrate it. Several of them have been helped by a grant from Nottinghamshire Community Foundation.



Monday Feb 13th **Lesbians, Gay Men & the Media***
an illustrated talk by Robert Thompson of the **Lesbian & Gay Media Archive** looking at Media Stereotyping
The Archive has newspaper/media extracts going back over 100 years.
7.30 for 8 pm start (no charge)
at **Nottingham Voluntary Action Centre**
7 Mansfield Road (over the road from the House of Fraser)



Tuesday Feb 14th **LGBT Pub Quiz Night with Prizes***
8.00 for 8.30 pm start
at the **Lord Roberts** £1 entrance
(In the Green Room downstairs)



Friday Feb 17th **Famous LGBT Faces Bingo with Prizes***
8.00 for 8.30 pm start
at the **Lord Roberts** £1 entrance
(In the Green Room downstairs)



* **Free buffet provided**

Wed Feb 22nd **Age Concern's LGBT History Day**
10 am to 3 pm, **Bradbury House**
12 Shakespeare St.



Age Concern would like older people to be part of this. People can contribute (poems, letters, photos, reminiscences ... anything you wish) or can just turn up and look round. If you would like to know more, phone Di Trinder (0115 8414471) or Denise Cuitto (0115 9194876).



Saturday Feb 25th **GAi Project Annual School Disco**
celebrating LGBT History month.
9.00 'til 1.00 at **Central**



In the background at some of these events will be displays charting local and national LGBT history.

As an adjunct to LGBT Month, we've hired **Broadway Cinema** on Sunday **April 16th**. Details of the film will be in the next QB.



THE HISTORY WEBSITE

In 2000, Switchboard won a Millennium Lottery award to carry out an LGBT History Project.

Much of the project has now been transferred to a website www.nlqshistory.ik.com

The website includes

- Timelines showing local and national developments since 1967
- Pictures of gay venues past and present
- An up-to-date summary on laws affecting LGB people
- Quotes from people's experiences of "coming out" and of life in the pre-1967 era



It also contains an on-line version of QB. The project is on-going and we are looking for more volunteers who would be prepared have an audio recording made of them talking about their experiences and of issues and events which have been important to them. If you would like to be involved, contact Lesbian and Gay Switchboard.

DO LESBIANS EXIST?

In the 1960's the epithet "homo" clearly referred only to men. Most of the UK was still living by the "Ladies do not do that sort of thing" attitude of Queen Victoria. The 1967 changes in the law applied only to men.

The "Age of Consent" section on the Stonewall website says that the age of consent is equal for all - gay men, lesbians and heterosexuals, but does not refer to any statement in the law which mentions that lesbian sex has been recognised.

The age of consent for lesbians, before and after the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000 was 16, but 16 because lesbians are women, not because the women involved are lesbian.

The explanatory notes for the 2000 Act say "This equalises the age of consent for sexual activity so that it is the same for male homosexuals as for heterosexuals and lesbians" i.e. it is the situation for gay men which has been changed, but not the situation for heterosexuals and lesbians.

The use of the word "lesbian" in the explanatory notes is a way of saying "this is what it means in practice", but the notes are not part of the Act. The Act contains no use of the words "lesbian, woman or women", but the section referring to the age of consent repeatedly uses "he".

A factsheet produced by the FPA says that until the 2003 Sexual Offences Act there was no age of consent for lesbian sex laid down in statute, but on examining the 2003 Act it seems the FPA document is making statements on inference rather than actuality. In the 51 pages of the Act, the 48 pages of the Notification and Orders and the 44 pages of Explanatory Notes, there is no reference to lesbians or consensual same-sex activity between women.

The Civil Registration of Partnership legislation clearly recognises female same-sex couples. This probably means that the letter of the law now says "Yes, lesbians exist", but lesbian sex does not. This may come as a surprise to many women in Nottingham.

CIVIL REGISTRATION

There has been a lot of coverage in newspapers of one of the disadvantages of Civil Partnerships, namely that if one of the partners is receiving income related benefits, then the income of the other partner will be taken into consideration and those benefits may be reduced. Do be aware that this situation will apply to all partnerships whether or not people have been registered.

There have also been suggestions that state pensions will be affected. This should not be the case. For the purpose of state pensions, everyone is treated individually.

There's a useful guide to the legal aspects of Civil Registration of Partnerships at the Stonewall website and also at www.civilpartnershiplaw.com

CAN YOU HELP?

Nika Misztal is a 3rd year student at Trent University and, as part of a project, is researching lesbian and gay rights in general, but with particular emphasis on Civil Partnerships.

If you have any comments on lesbian and gay rights, if you have any views on civil partnerships (whether you are in a relationship with a partner or not), please contact Nika. The results of the research will be fairly confidential as it will only be viewed by 2 lecturers at Trent.

You can contact her at N0043918@ntu.ac.uk or by phoning 07976 550510.

NOTTINGHAM'S GAY CLUBS

The first club in this area was **The Pavilion Club** half way between Nottingham and Derby in Shardlow. It developed out of a pub night called the "**Bona Ome**" club which was tried out in several pubs in places like Langley Mill, Sneinton and Shardlow. Eventually some of the people involved decided to buy an old sports pavilion and convert it into a genuine members club - owned by the members and run by the members. It opened in **1971** and was christened the "Handbag Club" by local residents.

A former member commented "I have very fond memories of the Pavilion Club. We had the patio outside. People sponsored a slab or a rose tree. I remember Stella, who was planting this memorial tree and she was that pissed on gin that she fell into the hole herself and the rose tree followed in after her."

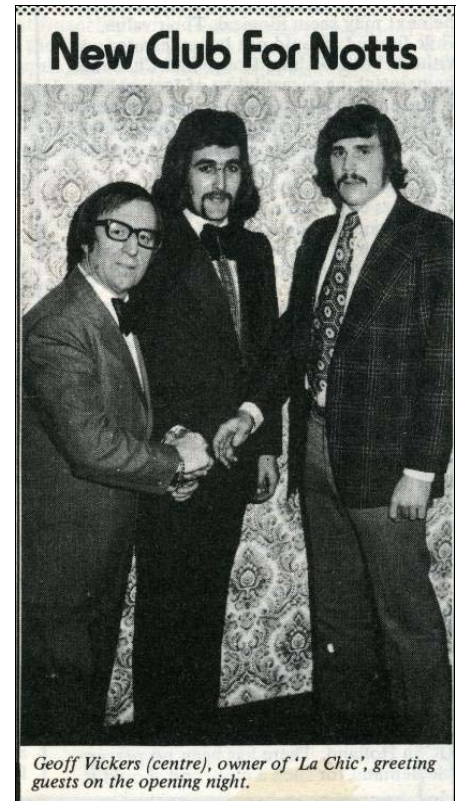
The first gay club in Nottingham was **Mario's**, on Stanford Street near what is now the Broadmarsh Centre. It converted from a teenyboppers club to a gay club in **1972**. Though often a bit tatty around the edges, it had a good and friendly atmosphere and continued successfully for over 10 years, changing its name to **Shades** and then to **Whispers**

1973 saw the opening of **La Chic** in what is now Albion House on Canal Street. La Chic was ground breaking in being the first club in the UK to have a licence which stated that it was specifically for use by gay men and lesbians - a situation which made headlines in the Nottingham Evening Post. In **1977** the closure of La Chic left a partial vacuum which others attempted to fill. On Alfreton Road a place called the **Stork Club** had one night as a gay club and then gave up. The **Sandpiper** on Broadway in the Lace Market lasted several months. It had considerable potential, but indifferent staff drove customers back to Shades.

For many, the highlight of **1981** was the opening of **Part II** club. The name originates in the fact that it took over the building previously occupied by La Chic club. The new club was large, with three bars, dance floor, restaurant and "quiet" area and was fitted out to a high standard. Unlike previous Nottingham clubs, Part II had a very visible front man in the entertaining form of Ross Smith. For its first two years a good argument could be made for saying that Part II was the best gay club in the UK.

In **1982** a disgruntled punter set fire to the Pavilion Club. The club was insured, but those running the club decided not to rebuild. The insurance money was used instead to set up the **Pavilion Trust**.

In **1984** a new phenomenon hit Nottingham. The big once-a-month one-nighter. The first Monday of every month was "**The Astoria**". In the 1960s there was a relatively sedate dance hall called the Sherwood Rooms on Collin Street at the bottom of Maid Marian Way. In the 1980s this had become the Astoria (and was later to transmogrify into **MGM** and then **Ocean**). The Astoria was a very large heterosexual disco club and they had been prevailed upon to use one of their off nights for the poofers. It was a great success. Part of the success was due to the music provided by Peter Martine, who later called his nights "**Revolution**". Peter is fondly known as the "Sleezemeister".



NOTTINGHAM'S GAY CLUBS



Part II closed in **1985** and other venues half-heartedly tried to fill the gap. The **Casablanca** was a tiny club on Greyhound Street and soon became known as the **Khazi**. A club in the Lace Market turned gay for a few months as did the **Catacombs** on Byard Lane, but both failed to catch on.

The outcome of this was that many Nottingham people realised that for the first time in their experience the gay scene was better in other cities. The traffic between Leicester and Nottingham and Birmingham and Nottingham started to go in the opposite direction.

In **1986** the Bradley family stepped in by opening a club on St. James' Street. It went through several name changes, getting marginally less tacky on each transformation. **Club 69** **L'Amour** **Nero's**. The venue soldiered on through part of the 1990s as "**De Luxe**" - not, perhaps, the most appropriate of names. Switchboarders remember the fundraiser they held for us. We don't remember receiving any "funds". In 1996 Casablanca was revived, re-named "**Kitsch**".

In **2000**, Nottingham's first proper gay club for several years opened as **NG1** next door to the Admiral Duncan. NG1 is definitely the real thing, it's also modern, big and well fitted out. When NG1 fundraises, the beneficiaries also receive the money!



NOTES AND QUEERIES FLASHBACKS

It's second time around for:

The Great Cormorant is also known as the European Shag. About 1 in 500 pairs of Cormorants is composed of 2 male birds. It therefore seems that male Shags seldom shag males.

Lesbian composer Dame Ethel Smyth was imprisoned after becoming active in the "votes for women" campaign. She conducted a performance of her suffragist anthem from a window in Holloway Prison using her toothbrush as a baton.

The Roman emperor Heliogabulus initiated a contest to find the man with the largest penis. He then "married" the winner.

Servants made redundant by the death of Princess Margaret included not only the Yeoman of the Pantries and the Maid to the Coffee Room, but also the Page of the Backpassage. We are not making this up.

The dildo used in the 1968 murder of actor Ramon Navarro was originally a gift from Rudolph Valentino and a replica of Valentino's penis. (We want to know how the dildo killed him ...)

The dictionary of Gay Slang defines Australian Sex as sex which involves licking all parts of the body in a set order. New Zealand Sex is the same without the rimming.

Is the sexuality of a town defined in any way by its name? Perhaps it is if you live in Gay Head (Massachusetts), Gays (Illinois), Fort Gay (Wyoming) and then there's Dildo (Newfoundland).

It is rumoured that Robert Mugabe's virulent homophobia stems back to his teenage years, when someone pointed out that his name is an anagram of bugame.

In 1947 a meeting of the Swedish Cabinet discussed the King, 89 year old Gustav V. The Interior Minister announced: "The King is homosexual". The Minister of Finances was heard to say "At his age ... how vigorous!"

In 1941, bisexual American composer George Antheil joined forces with 1940s movie star Hedy Lamarr to patent a remote control torpedo.

Joyce Grenfell's biography mentions film actor Maurice Flynn, described as "every gay man's dream". While filming, he left to go to the lavatory and was only found 8 days later painted blue from head to foot and playing the ukelele.

'ELLO TO ELI

Taking over from John Lippitt, Eli Joubert is the new face at the GAI Project. Having decided to come from South Africa to spend some time working in the UK, Eli, whose background is in Psychology, came across the vacancy through an internet search. Initially he was confused, like many, by this strange word GAI. Was it some quaint Nottinghamian term from the world of ayup-meduck? Having eventually deciphered the acronym, he decided that the GAI Project was for him - and the Project agreed.

When we think of all the recent positive changes in laws affecting LGBT people, it is interesting to be reminded that the South African constitution forbids any form of discrimination - including because of sexual orientation. That constitutional support is largely the inspiration of Nelson Mandela and makes South Africa very different from the majority of African states.

Apart from the general work of the Project in terms of counselling, sexual and mental health, Eli is now facilitating the Married Men's Group. He is hoping to develop support for gay prisoners and prisoners who have sex with other men and also research steroid use in Nottingham.

Eli's favourite colour is blue.

PENALTY SHOOT OUT?



It's simply not true that gay men dislike football. The game has many attractive features and, once more, our woman with the zoom lens has captured one.

Mr Rooney tells me that both he and Ronaldo really enjoyed their viewing of Brokeback Mountain prior to the match shown here.

FORUMS FOR YOUR VIEWS

Both the City Council and Notts Police hold LGBT consultation meetings about once every three months. Attendance at these meetings is not exclusive - yes, it's open to representatives of local LGBT organisations, but also to interested individuals.

The Police group usually meets at New College Nottingham (The Adams Building) and the City Council group meets at 7 Mansfield Road. For dates and times, contact Switchboard.

If you can't get along, but still have issues that you would like to be raised, again leave them with Switchboard, the GAI Project or phone the City's Action on Diversity Team on 0115 9157224.

FUNDS FOR LGBT GROUPS

LGBT groups based or working in Nottingham City areas could be eligible for a grant of up to £5K. You don't need to be a registered charity or even have a bank account. You could even be a brand new group that needs money to start up.



The application process is very straight forward and you can get help at all stages of the process - from discussing your initial ideas through to help with drawing up a project budget or completing the application form. You can get a decision within 4 to 10 weeks - which is very fast in the grants world.

So **whatever** you think Nottingham needs - like a gay writing group, a lesbian film club, a bisexual support group or a transgender information project - or if you need money to fund additional activities in an existing group - contact Nottingham Community Network's Funding Advisor, Cathy White on 0115 934 8426 to talk about the possibilities. But hurry - the future of this funding is currently uncertain - so don't miss the boat. (NCN provided the grant to restart QB - Ed.)

VICTIM SUPPORT NOTTINGHAMSHIRE NEEDS YOU

Victim Support is the independent national charity that was set up to help people cope with the effects of crime.

Last year, in Nottinghamshire alone we handled approximately 60,000 referrals of people who had been victims of crime. We contacted the majority of those people either by a personal visit, a telephone call or a letter.

Through our network of trained volunteers, we were able to provide emotional support and various forms of practical help such as dealing with insurance claims, basic security advice and personal safety tips. In cases of serious injury, we provide assistance with completing the forms and handling applications for Criminal Injuries Compensation.

We also support victims and witnesses who need to attend court to give evidence. We have Witness Service staff and volunteers in every criminal court in the County. A specialised service is provided by our Young Witness Service whose volunteers prepare young people under 18 to go into court and give evidence.

What Can You Do?

We are looking for more volunteers to join our teams. We need people who are good listeners, who can empathise with the experiences of the victim and who are patient and committed to being there for the victim.

You must be able to get on with others of different ages, cultures and backgrounds. Anyone from 18 to 80 can apply and no previous experience is necessary. We are particularly keen to recruit volunteers from the LGBT communities.

All new volunteer visitors complete a 5-day training course that is held at weekends. Visiting victims begins after Days 1-3 have been satisfactorily completed. We look for a minimum commitment from our volunteers of 2 hours per week, but if you can give us more than that, we can happily use it. In return, we provide support and supervision. A mileage allowance is paid along with other out-of-pocket expenses.

There are opportunities to meet with other volunteers both socially and in relation to the role. Those who want to can go on for further training to develop their skills to work with people who have suffered serious crimes such as domestic abuse, sexual violence or bereavement as the result of murder or manslaughter.

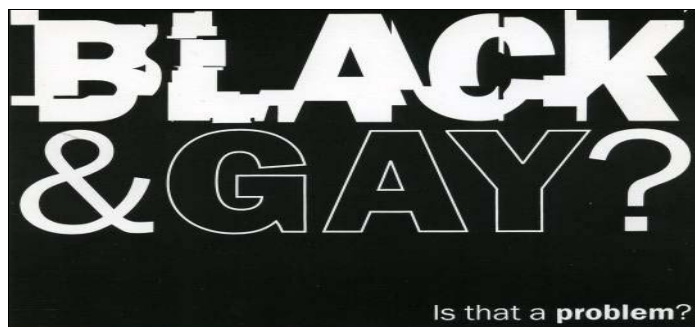
Volunteers for the Witness Service and Young Witness Service have slightly different training schedules appropriate to their role.

If the idea of being a Victim Support volunteer appeals to you, please phone Tony Cox on 0115 844 6071. He would be happy to talk to you about it and answer any questions you might have.

You can find out more and even volunteer on line at www.vsnotts.org/eyevolunteer

BLACK? ASIAN? GAY? BISEXUAL?

In recent years about 8% of Switchboard's callers have come from Black and Minority Ethnic communities. This is one of several reasons why In March 2005 Switchboard organised 2 conferences on the subject of LGB issues in BME communities. One of the consequences of these events was the expression of the need for a local social and support group for BME people who identify as LGB.



It is hoped that a group for Black and Asian men who identify as gay or bisexual will start soon. If you would like to be part of such a group, contact Switchboard or the GAi Project for more information. (Contact details are on the back page).

AGGRAVATION

At the moment homophobic crime is not an offence in itself. If you are physically assaulted because of your sexuality it is a crime (assault), but not "homophobic crime".

The **Criminal Justice Act 2003** provides increased sentences for assault involving or motivated by hostility based on sexual orientation in England and Wales; this part of the Act came into force in April 2004.

If the victim perceives the offence to be homophobic and there is evidence to support this, the judge will be required to treat this as an **aggravating factor** and state to the court any extra elements of the sentence they are imposing because of this factor. When reporting such incidents to the police it is therefore important to tell them that it is a homophobic incident.

GROUP OF THE DAY

Breakout started life in Oct. 1996 as a joint enterprise between Switchboard and the GAI Project. Its remit is as true today as it was then. It was recognized that not all gay or bi-sexual men would want to go on the gay scene for a variety of reasons, and this was a way to enable them to meet in a safe environment and to socialize and relax with each other. As a group already existed for the under 26s, Breakout was promoted for the 'older' person - those 26 and above!

This forum also allowed the GAI project to provide advice, support, information and to distribute free condoms to those that required them.

Breakout was initially funded by the GAI project and had the benefit of being facilitated by two sessional workers. When funding ceased, Breakout was lucky enough to have one of the sessional workers continue as Chairman on a voluntary basis. A committee was set up to run the group and this continues to be the format today. It is run by volunteers with help from the GAI project when it's needed.

Meeting each and every Tuesday, save for Christmas and New Year holidays, the doors to the Health shop on Broad Street are open for light refreshments, friendly banter and gossip, from 7.30 pm with the designated activity commencing at 8.00pm. A quarterly calendar is prepared in advance which details the activity for the period. Some attend all, others pick and chose - 'the choice is yours' - as the saying goes!

Visitors come in all shapes and sizes, different walks of life and from various parts of the world. People have come from the wider Midlands region - Newark, Derby, Leicester and even Birmingham. The larger picture shows Breakout having visitors from Italy, China, Malaya, not to mention Scotland and Wales!! Good and lasting friendships have been formed. More romantic relationships have also been known to develop within the confines of the Health Shop! Over the past year, on average, around 23 meet for their Tuesday dose of friendship and fun.

What does Breakout do? The activities on the program are as varied as possible bearing in mind the timescale (we finish at 9.00 pm) and that we try to limit the expense of activities so no-one is excluded.

We have had: Indian Head Massage; Solicitors talking about same sex relationships and the preparation and necessity of wills; dealing with domestic violence; handwriting analysis; interpretation of dreams; health and personal development speakers; games and quizzes. For foodies amongst us, there have been pancake evenings, Halloween evenings and the inevitable 'any excuse for a party' evenings!

Some events are outside the Health Shop - some of the parties take place at suitable gay/gay friendly venues. We have also visited the caves in Nottingham, toured the Council House in the Market Square, gone bowling, Pantomime trips, visit to BBC Radio Nottingham studios, and what has now become an annual weekend in Blackpool.

So what does all this cost? As a voluntary organization, the events at the Health Shop are free. Donations are generously made by those that attend and these monies go to provide light refreshments. Of course activities such as meals out and bowling etc cost whatever they cost, but an effort is made for these to be as economical as possible and to spread them out across the year so that everyone can attend.

Donations mount up, and in return Breakout makes donations back into the Gay community. Every year it donates money to the Nottingham Hardship fund, World Aids Day etc. It supports Pride events and on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month members of Breakout meet to prepare the condom packs that are distributed to local gay venues.

New visitors are always welcome. With over 9400 visitors since it began (based on an average of 20 a week) we are sure you'll meet a variety of like minded gay men who will offer their friendship. Please feel free to come along any week. To see what is on the agenda at any time, Breakout has its own website www.breakoutnottm.org.uk For those who are shy or need encouragement, a committee member is willing to meet beforehand and take you along. So please, importantly, come along and have some light hearted fun!

See you there.

The picture below shows Breakout's Treasurer presenting a check to Armored Young of the Hardship fund at our Xmas party. The money was collected through a raffle which Breakout organised at the Lord Roberts.



Lesbian & Gay Switchboard

0115 934 8485 or 01623 621515

Monday-Friday
7-10pm

7 Mansfield Road, Nottingham, NG1 3FB.

notts@lgswitchboard.fsnet.co.uk

The GAI Project

0115 947 6868

Monday-Friday
daytimes

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

gaiproject@nottinghamcity-pct.nhs.uk

**Police Homophobic Crime
Helpline**

0800 085 8522

SOME LOCAL LISTINGS

Breakout
(at the
Health Shop)

Social group for gay & bisexual men. Tuesdays 7.30pm
Contact Switchboard or GAI Project or go to
www.breakoutnottm.org.uk

**Married Men's
Group**

Support for men who are (or have been) in relationships
with women and are also attracted to men.
Contact Switchboard or GAI Project

**Older Gay Men's
Group**

Support and social group for men aged 50+. Meets on
3rd Sunday of month, 4pm at Health Shop.
Contact GAI Project.

Outburst!

Group for LGB young people up to the age of 25.
Meets every Monday at Base 51. Phone or text 07940
761160 (Davina) for details.

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; University of Nottingham & Trent University LGBT Societies;
Women's Cycling Group; Nottingham City Women's Football Club; Refugee
Forum Gay Men's Group; Police LGB Support Network; Nottingham Bisexual
Women's Group; Lesbians in Ashfield Friendship & Support; North
Notts Gay Women's Walking Group; LGB Youth Groups in Newark, Work-
sop & Mansfield; Newark Gay Men's Social Group; E. Midlands Gay Out-
door Club and, of course, S.H.A.G.G.E.R.S.

DIARY

THEY'RE LADIES, YOU KNOW

Nottingham lies back and thinks of Britain. Welcome to the projectile vomiting, cross-dressing, incontinent, quite gay and very politically incorrect world of Little Britain. Go along and make sure that Daffyd isn't the only gay in the Royal Concert Hall, though if you are on the front row, it may be wise to wear waterproof clothing. 14th to 16th February at 7.30 pm.

IDLE VICE

"Dough, that stuff you have to knead. Ray, a fellow who's a tart. Me, the one who writes this screed. Far, the first 3 parts of fart. So....." so, perhaps my memory is playing up. If the words are not quite as you recollect, refresh yourself at Sing-a-long-a Sound of Music, March 23rd 7.30 pm, again at the Royal Concert Hall. As they say, fancy dress, though not obligatory, is highly recommended.



NOTTINGHAM PRIDE

We hear that Nottingham Pride will be held on Saturday July 29th - again at the Arboretum.

AMERICAN ALL-IN WRESTLING

Sat. Feb. 4th. Royal Concert Hall. This is only mentioned because it allows a repeat of Mae West's comment "If it's all in, why wrestle?"

COURSES FOR WOMEN

Many, mainly free, courses for women are being run during February and March at the Women's Centre. They are too numerous to mention, but include Photoshop, Creating Mosaics and singing for fun. Phone 0115 9240041 for details.

REMEMBERING THE HOLOCAUST

The number of survivors of the Holocaust dwindles year by year. One of the few living gay survivors has written about his experiences and will be giving a talk and signing his book at an event at the Holocaust Centre in Laxton. The date has not yet been fixed, but it will be in March or April. When the details are ready, you will be able to see them on the website www.nottslgb.org.uk, the website of the North Notts LGB Development group.

LGBT HISTORY MONTH

For a guide to what's going on elsewhere, have a look at the LGBT History Month website www.lgbthistorymonth.org.uk