

QB

Nottinghamshire's Queer Bulletin

April/May 2006
Number 29

Does anybody read this bit? We could just make things up, unlike the rest of QB, which of course is the unsullied truth. Perhaps we could write that a senior Lib-Dem politician had an affair with a rent boy, or that in Spain they throw donkeys out of windows or that a 426 million year old fossilised penis was discovered preserved in volcanic ash at a site in Herefordshire.... but no one would believe us.

Did you know that the world's biggest hernia weighs 1237 kg and is in the care of the National Truss?

There articles in this issue from **Age Concern** and **Relate**; two organisations which people may wrongly imagine have nothing to do with LGBT People.

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-May, 2006.

STRONG WORDS AT COUNTY HALL

FREE



Nottinghamshire County Council is running a series of talks called "Strong words at County Hall".

Peter Tatchell's contribution is called "Taking risks for Human Rights". It's on Wednesday May 3rd at 7.00 pm. Tickets are £6 (£5 for those entitled to concessions) and are available from Nottingham Playhouse (phone 0115 941 9419), or on the door. The venue is the Assembly Room at County Hall, which has disabled access. You can find more about Peter Tatchell on his website www.petertatchell.net

LGBT HISTORY MONTH - A RETROSPECTIVE

As well as the various events which took place in February, an LGBT History display was produced. The display was in several parts:

- ◆ a Timeline, consisting of notes and pictures of mainly local events from 1967 to 2005, part of which you can see on page 3
- ◆ Some potted biographies plus pictures of LGBT people from Black and minority ethnic communities
- ◆ Front pages from 16 editions of Gay News from the 1970s (see below)



- ◆ A Powerpoint presentation of 300 famous LGBT people
- ◆ Recordings of the reminiscences of several local LGBT people about things such as "coming out", socialising in pre-1967 days, how attitudes in society have changed.

After spending a few days in the Green Room of the Lord Roberts, the display moved on to

- ◆ the Age Concern LGBT History Day (February 22nd),
- ◆ Sherwood Lodge Police HQ (February 23rd/24th),
- ◆ the City Council's Diversity Day (February 27th),
- ◆ the City Council's "Challenging Heterosexism" day (March 3rd)
- ◆ the Real Lives, Real People conference in Worksop (March 9th).

If anyone, or any organisation, would like to borrow all or part of the display for their own events, please contact Switchboard.

This edition of QB is sponsored by Nottinghamshire Police

RELATE

An awareness campaign is being launched by the counselling organisation, **Relate Nottinghamshire**, to highlight the help available to couples in same-sex relationships, in the wake of the new laws on gay 'marriages.'

Relate has been exploring with help agencies and members of the local gay community how the new the new civil partnership legislation has changed the legal and social landscape. Now it is distributing thousands of leaflets through libraries, voluntary organisations and other outlets, outlining its counselling service on same-sex relationship issues.

"Our doors have always been open to the gay community and over the years we have had a steady stream of clients," explained Relate Nottinghamshire director Bridget Gilliatt. "But the new law is also a challenge to us. We have moved up a gear in assessing its longer-term impact on relationships, away from the headlines that 'celebrity' civil partnerships have attracted so far.

"Same-sex couples not only face many of the same pressures as heterosexual relationships, but often have additional strains and pressures to deal with. "There has been a major shift in public attitudes in recent years, but many gay people still feel their relationships are regarded by society as less valid than those between heterosexual couples.

"For a same-sex couple considering civil partnership, a single confidential session with a trained counsellor can help them to talk frankly about the nature of their relationship and to map out their own future for themselves."

"There is often a misconception that counsellors try to impose their own world view. In fact, the skill lies in asking the right questions, listening to the answers and guiding people through the process."

"The Government predicts that up to 22,000 couples across the country will enter civil partnerships within five years. "It is not our role to push couples towards civil partnership, but it is now inevitably going to be on their agenda because it offers a legal status embodying the rights, privileges and responsibilities enjoyed by heterosexual couples when they marry," said Bridget.

"However, because it is breaking new ground, same-sex couples find themselves with few precedents to follow. They may face difficulties with their respective families, and there may be hostility towards a same-sex partner.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT: Relate Nottinghamshire:
Bridget Gilliatt 0115 9507836

IT AINT NECESSARILY SO

Neither the Bible nor the Koran have much, if anything, to say about the sexuality of lesbians or women as a whole - should we be surprised? The situation for men is rather different.

The main negative references in the Bible are in Leviticus, in the Sodom and Gomorrah bit and in the writings of St. Paul. Leviticus is always good for a laugh. It lists 642 ethical and ritual laws such as:

You must not: harvest the corners of a field; shave or get a haircut; wear clothes of a mixed textile blend; have a tattoo; eat shrimps. You must: kill adulterers; kill a child which curses its parents (3 cheers for Leviticus); permit slavery; observe the Feast of Trumpets.....

These days, 641 of the laws are ignored. Can you guess which topic the religious fundamentalists still cling to?

The Old Testament was written in ancient Hebrew and by the time people got around to translating it into other languages, the meaning of lots of words had changed. The sin of the men of Sodom had nothing to do with gay sex, but everything to do with their lack of hospitality to their guests. The confusion stems from a mistranslation of the Hebrew word which means to "know". In the New Testament it could mean having sex with someone and when you wrongly carry that meaning back into the Old Testament you get the well-known, but false, interpretation that Sodom was destroyed because its men folk were gay.

The vigorous condemnation of gay men in the Koran stems from the fact that the Koran takes over - lock, stock and mistranslation - the Sodom and Gomorrah story from the Bible.

St. Paul, of course, wrote in Ancient Greek. His translators talk about "unnatural acts" between men i.e. it's unnatural *and therefore* bad. How natural is playing the piano? How natural is an iPod or a DVD? If you have appendicitis, the natural thing is to die, but we generally prefer the unnatural process of being anaesthetised, cut open, having the appendix removed and being sewn up again.

St. Paul actually uses the words "para physin", which can translate as unnatural. It can also translate as "unusual" i.e. being different, but not "wrong", like having red hair or being left-handed. In one description St. Paul refers to God acting "para physin". One can't have it both ways. Was St. Paul saying that God was acting unnaturally and was therefore bad?

NOTES AND QUEERIES

- As a by-product of the Civil Partnership Act, all the many lesbian and gay couples who own their own slaughterhouses will have the slaughterhouse licence automatically transferred should one partner die.
- From the Evening Post lonely hearts section: Cypriot Love God with slight back trouble due to previous lifestyle, seeks male 18-85 for TLC.
- Right wing US Christian groups have praised the Emperor Penguin as an example of "intelligent design" i.e. the penguin did not evolve, but was assembled by a higher power - a bit like Lego with feathers. To design a lifestyle where one penguin sits on ice with its egg for weeks on end while the other flip flops hundreds of miles in search of food may show great devotion on the part of the penguin, but also an "interesting" sense of humour on the part of their Creator. Setting up penguins as an examples of good "straight" parenting is punctured by the pair of penguins in a US zoo which "adopted" an egg and raised the resultant chick.
- Canadian zoo officials have been worrying about gay ducks. Larry Le Sage, curator of the Vancouver zoo said "I noticed the mallards were gay about 3 years ago, but now the wood ducks have picked it up." He believes the wood ducks were corrupted by the mallards and has asked the Canadian Wildlife Service to sexually re-programme the gay drakes.



Above, you can see some of the faces seen at the Famous Faces LGBT Bingo Night. Below, you can see some of the famous faces seen at the LGBT History Quiz night at the Lord Roberts.



LGBT HISTORY MONTH ... MORE

The pictures shown on the front page of the last QB were (going down, then across the page)

- Rock Hudson
- Lawrence of Arabia
- K. D. Laing
- Noel Coward
- Benjamin Britten
- Dame Ethel Smyth
- Martina Navratilova
- Bessie Smith
- Evan Davis
- Lord Waheed Alli
- Nancy Spain
- Virginia Woolf

The first person to name correctly all the faces (the ONLY person to name correctly all the faces) was M. Spencer from Basford, who gets a £10 Virgin token that is to say a £10 token to be used at Virgin Megastore, not a token to be exchanged for a virgin valued at £10 or even for a token virgin.

DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT

Some people have been worrying unnecessarily about the exception allowed for employers in religious/faith based organisations. There have been suggestions that teachers in faith-based schools and nurses in hospices would be legally subject to discrimination if they were lesbian or gay.

TWO conditions have both to be met before such discrimination is allowed

1. The employment must be for the purposes of organised religion AND
2. Is necessary to comply with religious doctrine or to avoid conflicting with the convictions of a significant number of the religion's followers.

Trying to discriminate against teachers and nurses falls at the first hurdle. The government has stated clearly that a teacher in a faith-based school is employed for the purpose of education, not organised religion and similarly a nurse is employed for the purpose of health care.

AGE CONCERN

Age Concern Nottingham and Nottinghamshire is an independent local charity providing advice, information and services to older people across Nottingham City and County. ACNN can trace its history back to 1942. The charity has been growing steadily ever since its origins until today when we are proud to be the biggest local charity providing services to older people in Nottinghamshire. Our range of services includes:

Luncheon Clubs; Community Support Services; Day Centres and Day Care; Direct Payments Support Service; Carer's Support Services; Harmony Counselling Service; Home Maintenance Services; Information and Advice Services; Kindred Spirits Services; Advocacy Services; Hospital based Services; Safe and Sound Services; Housing Services; Traders Register; Charity Shops; Visiting Services.

ACNN have a recently developed Equality and Diversity policy accompanied by an extensive Diversity Action Plan. A large part of this work is developing links with older people from LGB communities with a view to developing appropriate and accessible services. ACNN is currently developing a LGB older people's group. The group will be instrumental in highlighting the needs and developing services for older people from LGB in Nottinghamshire. This work is supported by Age Concern England's Opening Doors project.

You can find out more about both Age Concern England and ACNN on line at:

www.ageconcernnotts.org.uk
www.ageconcern.org.uk

If you would like a chat about our work or are interested in the LGB older peoples group please phone Di Trinder on 0115 8440011.



25 people gathered for a presentation on LGBT History at the Age Concern LGBT History day.

GROUP OF THE DAY

Something Social started out as a social real world gathering for an online gay community on OUTEverywhere.com in 2001. There's no wish to make money; it's simply people organising "non-scene" social events in their spare time!

The basis for all the events that now take place is that they are for open minded people - a whole mix of people who share an open mindedness to gender and belief, and ultimately want to enjoy themselves!

Many people who are gay have non-gay friends, so why not open the door to the open-minded in our community? This is an opportunity for gay, lesbian, bi, transgender and open minded people to meet each other!

There are several components to "Something Social". **Sunday Social**, which has been going for 4 years, meets once every few months and is a free event offering drink and food deals as well as competitions which are designed to get people talking. It runs from 4 pm 'til 8 pm and we regularly have between 50 and 75 people along at venues such as the Slug and Lettuce, Low Pavement.

There's **Badminton Social** which a Sunday Social attendee started in December 2005. It's a weekly Badminton social aimed at people with mixed levels of badminton skills. It involves people playing doubles at Victoria Leisure Centre in Nottingham and costs just £2.50 for 2 hours with shuttles supplied. Each week there's now around 15 people coming along.

Eat Out Social started in February and is a dinner club designed to be a social opportunity while also getting a great deal in a good restaurant and a great atmosphere.

Later in 2006, **Murder Social** will be a murder mystery night happening on a Saturday afternoon and evening on the outskirts of Nottingham with money from each ticket going to charity.

As **Something Social** is open to the events people want to do, attendees have recently talked about setting up a Pub Quiz, Football Team, and Karaoke Club! We are keen to provide as much variety as we can and would be delighted if people would like to come along to the next event.

To keep up-to-date with what Something Social is doing, go to our website, which is

www.somethingsocial.co.uk

QUOTE QUOTA

- ◆ Gay marriage should be legal, if only to raise the standard of dancing at receptions (Liz Langley)
- ◆ I'm as pure as the driven slush (Tallulah Bankhead)
- ◆ If God had intended us to be athletes, we would have been born with jockstraps (Sir Ian McKellen)
- ◆ If homosexuality is a disease, let's all call in queer to work: "Hello, can't work today, still queer". (Robin Tyler)
- ◆ As Socrates said "The untelevised life is not worth living". (Gore Vidal)
- ◆ Never keep up with the Jones. Drag them down to your level, it's cheaper (Quentin Crisp)
- ◆ Homophobia is the irrational fear that 3 fags will break into your home and redecorate it against your will (Tom Ammiano)
- ◆ I came out by saying "Mother, would you please pass the gravy to a homosexual?" She passed it to my father. A terrible scene followed. (Bob Smith)
- ◆ It's no wonder we know how to dress; we've spent centuries in closets (Isaac Mizrahi)

LOVE SETS YOU FREE

Janni Kowalski talks about his book "**Liebe Macht Frei**" (Love sets you Free) **Thursday 6th April** 4.30pm – 6.30pm at The Beth Shalom Holocaust Centre, Laxton, Notts.

Janni Kowalski tells the story of how he lost his memory completely when he was buried in the rubble of collapsed buildings during the 1939 Warsaw blitz. Being extraordinarily beautiful he was frequently mistaken for a girl. He was taken in by a Jewish family, and helped provide for them first, in the ghetto and then again when transferred to Auschwitz. To do this, he used the assets at his disposal, namely, his beauty and unusual, girlish body. But there was nothing he could do to save the family of five from the horrors of Auschwitz and then Belzen. Janni did survive and accepted his unusual features, which allowed him to live a very individual life. 'Liebe macht frei' is the story of loyalty, love and tragedy. One man's battle against the odds.

Janni Kowlaski will sign copies of his book, the proceeds of which will be shared with the Holocaust Centre.

Enquiries: 01623 861664 Entry by voluntary donation at the door. Afterwards there will be a candle lighting.

DIVERSITY EMBRACED

Over 100 people (police - including members of the gay and bisexual support group, ancillary staff and visitors) viewed the LGBT History display (see below) at **Sherwood Lodge Police HQ**. The event was organised by Roger Freeman of the Hate Crimes Team. Glen Williams, Vice President of the National Black Police Association, said that the part of the display dealing with Black and Asian gays was a particularly useful resource.



CAN YOU HELP? (1)

Chloe Setter, an MA student at Trent University, is researching the impact of the Civil Partnership Act 2004 for a dissertation. She would like to speak to anyone with any knowledge of civil partnerships - whether they have had one, plan to, or are involved in the area at all in any way. Anyone interested can contact her by email, phone or in person. E-mail: csetter@orange.net or tel: 07890 120834.

CAN YOU HELP? (2)

QB is supposed to be distributed to all Nottinghamshire's Libraries. If you think we are going to pedal around on the QB tricycle checking on this, you are mistaken. We know they appear at Central Library; we'd be ever so grateful if you could e-mail us if you've noticed it elsewhere.

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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

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; the Chameleon Group; University of Nottingham & Trent University LGBT Societies; Women's Cycling Group; Nottingham City Women's Football Club; Refugee Forum Gay Men's Group; Something Social; Notts Police Gay & Bisexual Support; Nottingham Bisexual Women's Group; Lesbians in Ashfield Friendship & Support; North Notts Gay Women's Walking Group; LGB Youth Groups in Newark, Worksop & Mansfield; Newark Gay Men's Social Group; East Midlands Gay Outdoor Club ... and, of course, S.H.A.G.G.E.R.S.

DIARY

BROADWAY FILM

On **Sunday April 16th**, 1.00 pm at Broadway Cinema there will be a film with an LGBT theme - unfortunately we can't give you the title at the time of going to print. It *WILL* be given as soon as available on the website www.nlgshistory.ik.com There will also be some free tickets.

SPRING AWAKENING

The inaugural LGBT Springfest will take place in the grounds of Newstead Abbey. Come along and take part in the Morris Dancing; exhibit your prize vegetables at the Flower and Produce Competition. Thrill to the sound of the massed trombones of the combined Gay Outdoor Club and Hyking Dykes Military Band. Entrance Free. 2.00 to 6.00 pm, **April 1st** (please note the date for your diary).

PRIDES IN PROXIMITY

Birmingham Pride's 10th year celebration, a festival for the gay, lesbian and bisexual community, held in the gay village around Hurst Street. Parade, Street Festival, and community fete. - **27-29 May 2006** - PO Box 6612, Birmingham, B5 4TQ. Tel: 08702 364 141.

Leicester Pride has been scheduled for Saturday **June 24th**.

BRITAIN, BRITAIN, BRITAIN

For those who missed it in February, Little Britain is regurgitated at the Royal Concert Hall on the **27th and 28th of April**, 7.30 pm.

ABBA DABBA DO

The Royal Concert Hall invites you to delve into your wardrobe for your lycra, platform shoes, blonde wigs and false beards. It's "Sing-a-long-a-ABBA" so if you are fond of those Swedes, don't fail to turnip on Tuesday **April 25th** 7.30 pm.

STRESSED AND OUT

A day to help deal with stress for those who work in the LGBT Voluntary Sector. Inspiring speakers, therapies and interventions to relieve stress, workshops to help deal with anxieties. Friday **April 7th** at the Leicester LGB Centre 12.30 to 5 pm. For details phone the LGBT Consortium 020 7064 8383.

REMEMBERING THE HOLOCAUST

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