

# QB

## Nottinghamshire's Queer Bulletin

April/May 2008  
Number 41

In this edition:

The list of features shown below has been printed in invisible ink. Everything will be revealed if you just warm your copy of QB on a radiator or for 10 minutes in the oven at Regulo 3.

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 2008.

**Switchboard is registered charity number 1114273**

This edition of QB is sponsored by **The Lace Market Theatre** via their performance of the Gay Man's Guide. Special thanks go to author Paul Strickland for organising everything.

## A RAINBOW FLAG OVER THE COUNCIL HOUSE

**FREE**



Seen here in sumptuous black and white. The City Council again showed that they are prepared to acknowledge and support major LGBT events.

The flag has been flown on the dates of some previous Nottingham Pride festivals, but this is the first time it has been seen celebrating LGBT History Month. It seems that History Month is establishing itself as an important landmark in the calendar.

It is no surprise to learn that London led the way with LGBT History Month events, but the national LGBT History Month website suggested that elsewhere the most activity was in the East Midlands.

## LGBT EXHIBITION AT VIEW FROM THE TOP



Over 100 people attended the LGBT exhibition on the February 12th launch night. The event was also the launch for **Nottinghamshire's Rainbow Heritage**, the LGBT history project supported by the Heritage Lottery fund.

The bottom right picture shows Councillor Leon Unczur presenting a certificate to Anna Lerner, who was representing the Laxton Holocaust Centre ..... see inside for more details.

## QB'S BITS

Have you discovered **Pink News** yet? It's an internet LGBT newspaper and it's full of the latest information about things that affect us and interest us. We at QB are quite hesitant about pointing you in their direction as we pinch so much from their website. You can find Pink News at [www.pinknews.co.uk](http://www.pinknews.co.uk)

The performance of "**The Gay Man's Guide**" on Feb. 15th at the Lace Market was completely sold out and deservedly so - it was a tremendously enjoyable evening. There is talk that the play will be repeated in the run up to Nottingham Pride.

The **Nottingham Forest Team** (and that includes the women's team) will feature in an anti-homophobic bullying poster which should be ready for May 17th, the International Day against Homophobia.

## MANSFIELD WANTS TO KNOW

"Would you like to help shape the services of **Mansfield District Council**? We are looking to talk to members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community about the ways in which we deliver our services and how they affect you?"

If you are interested in letting us know your views, please contact Emma Lees on 01623 463372 or email [elees@mansfield.gov.uk](mailto:elees@mansfield.gov.uk) all information will be treated confidentially. "

# Fanny's!

## Women Only Night

Upstairs @ The Canalhouse Bar,  
Canal Street,  
Nottingham NG1 7EH  
(Next to Via Fossa)

Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> April 08  
8pm - 1am

Disco starts at 9pm £5 Entry

Although this venue is upstairs, there is a lift. Tickets will only be available on the night. Any queries e-mail

[fannys.nottingham@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:fannys.nottingham@hotmail.co.uk)

## THE LGBT EXHIBITION

Of the 400 or more people who went along to the exhibition at the View from the Top, 92 filled in a questionnaire.

Which part of the exhibition did you like best? "All of it", said many of them. Other parts which went down particularly well were the projections of 600 famous LGBT faces, the local and national timelines, pictures from Nottingham Pride, the front pages from 1970s Gay News, the Pink Professions and the details of how the law (both in this country and abroad) has affected us.



One feature of the first evening was the presentation of three certificates. These were for individuals or organisations which have a Nottinghamshire connection and have made a contribution to the local or national LGBT community. They were awarded to:

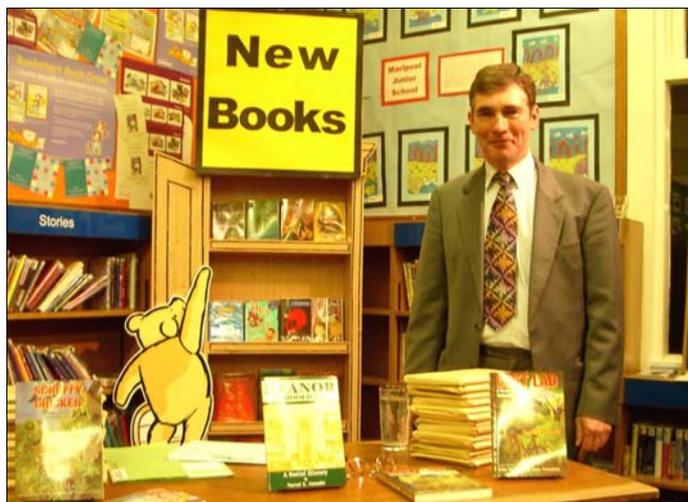
**The New Foresters** (Debbie Law received the award) - for continued support for the LGBT community, and lesbians in particular, for 50 years.

**Ike Cowen** - for services to the early days of gay activism. Ike started the Nottingham Campaign for Homosexual Equality group; he helped start the first gay club in the Midlands (the Pavilion Club); he was one of the first people to have useful dialogues with the police. Ike (who is 90) was unable to attend - the award was received on his behalf by Roger Hollier.

**The Laxton Holocaust Centre** - for support of national remembrance of gay victims of the Holocaust, and continued support for victims of persecution. The centre has held 2 LGBT events, has a memorial plaque in its garden and hopes to do more work with the local LGBT community.

The exhibition organisers would like to thank the City Council, Amicus, Co-op Community Fund and Switchboard as well as the Heritage Lottery Fund for contributing towards the costs of the exhibition.

## QB TRAVELS ABROAD



At the annual LGBT History Quiz at the Lord Roberts, one of the multiple choice questions was "what is the name of **Narvel Annable's** book about local gay life in the 1960s - is it Scruffy Parrot, Scruffy Chicken, Scruffy Blue Tit or Scruffy Vulture?"

The next day we travelled abroad, that's to say to Derbyshire, where Narvel gave readings from his books to a full house at Heanor Library.

Most of the characters in the novels are based on real people who populated the pre-1967 Nottingham and Derby gay scenes and whose eccentricities are brought to amusing life by Narvel. His new book "Secret Summer" should be published towards the end of this year.

It's "Chicken", by the way.

## BRIEFS ON AND OFF THE SCENE

- ◆ Mad about the movies? There's a new women's group "**Nottingham Film Group**" which is just for you. The idea is to meet about once a month to see a film at Broadway and then get together after for a natter about it. For further information contact Lizi on [lizi2910@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:lizi2910@yahoo.co.uk)
- ◆ More dates have been set for the **Hidden Talents** women's nights at the Maze. Put Saturday May 3rd and Friday July 11th into your diaries.
- ◆ @D2 has re-opened
- ◆ NG1's opening days are now Friday, Saturday and Sunday
- ◆ An LGBTQ group has started at **Bilborough College** - contact Switchboard for details.

## POLICE HQ GOES LGBT

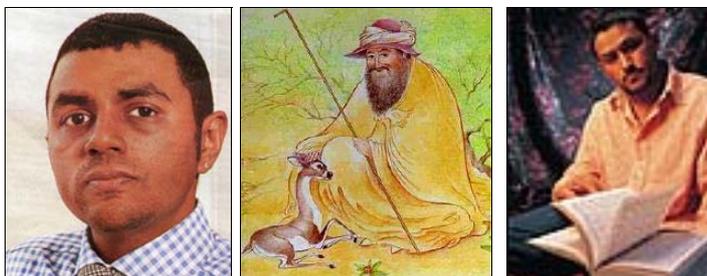
Nottinghamshire Police and the force OUTnetwork supported LGBT History Month on 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> of February with a display hosted at the Force Headquarters' canteen.

The display, created by Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Lesbian and Gay Switchboard, was a time-line of LGBT history in the county from the 1960's to the present day. It also included the Powerpoint presentation showing over 500 famous LGBT faces, a few of which certainly prompted some healthy debate amongst staff. The display is now an annual event and is always well received. Roger Freeman - Nottinghamshire Police.

## STOLEN POSTERS

80 posters from the LGBT exhibition were transferred to Angel Row library, where they were on display for a fortnight. In the early 1980s, displays of lesbian and gay materials were frequently vandalised. This display was not vandalised, but 3 of the posters were stolen.

One thing common to all 3 posters was that they were the only posters which carried pictures of gay Muslims - Lord Ali, poet Muhammed Hafiz and Imam Mushin Hendricks. Draw your own conclusions.



The missing posters were reprinted and, amongst others, were part of the display seen in the foyer of the **Council House** from March 3rd to March 7th. See below. We must point out that the portrait of the Sheriff in the background is not part of the display!

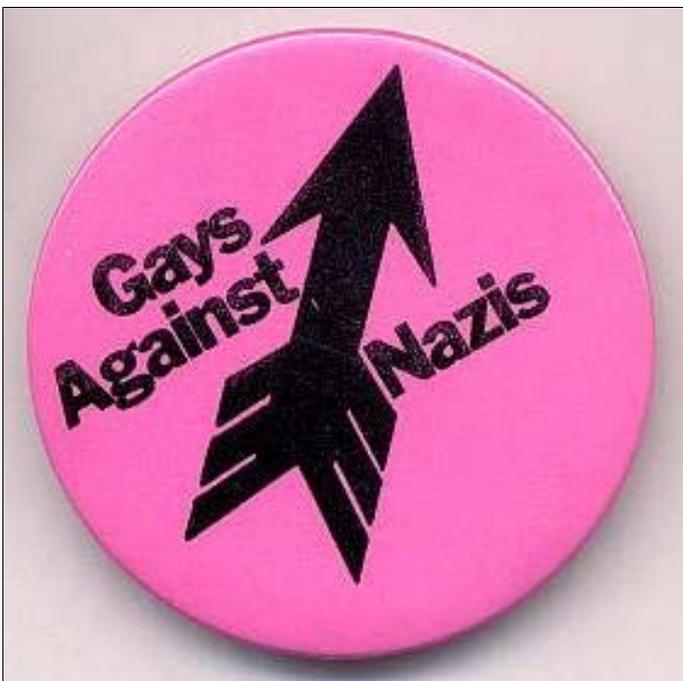




**Gay Sweatshop** was formed in London in 1975 and had its roots in the lunchtime theatre club “Ambience” held at the Almost Free theatre. The intention of the group was to counteract the prevailing conception in mainstream theatre of what homosexuals were like, therefore providing a more realistic image for the public.

In 1976 Gay Sweatshop put on a lunchtime season at the Institute of Contemporary Arts. Productions included “Mister X”, “Any Woman can” by Jill Posener, “Randy Robinson’s Unsuitable Relationship” by Andrew Davies, Ian Brown’s “The Fork”, Stone” by Edward Bond and “Indiscreet”.

One of their most memorable productions was “As Time Goes By”, a three part productions set in 1896 after the Oscar Wilde trial, in 1930s Berlin and in 1969 when Gay Liberation was born.



**Gays Against the Nazis** was one of a number of anti-fascist groups which sprang up in the 1970s to counter the efforts of the National Front.

The National Front was the equivalent in its day of the British National Party and its scapegoating techniques were often applied to lesbians and gays.

Other groups included: Women Against the Nazis; Trade Unions Against the Nazis; School Kids Against the Nazis and Civil Servants Against the Nazis.

Applying the principle that many homophobes are people who repress their own homosexuality, it will come as no surprise that several of the leading members of the National Front were later outed as being gay.



The **Tom Robinson Band** hit the club scene in 1976 in the middle of London’s punk explosion. Their live shows got favourable reviews and soon A&R men were attending many of their gigs. Says Tom “As a broke, gay guitarist scratching a living on the fringes of the music business, I inhaled deeply. Our band nailed its flag to the mast of minority rights and set sail across the London pub circuit.

There was one small problem - a song in the band’s set called “Glad to be Gay” that is one of the most convincingly angry and sincere performances you will ever hear in rock music. Even some of the punk independents who were supposed to take chances shied away. Stiff Records president, Jake Riviera, called them “fucking queer music”.

As if to demonstrate the complexities of sexuality, Tom Robinson later got married.

# Gay Nottingham Times

**No. 2** Claiming our history, Celebrating our present, Creating the future

## Campaign for Homosexual Equality (CHE)

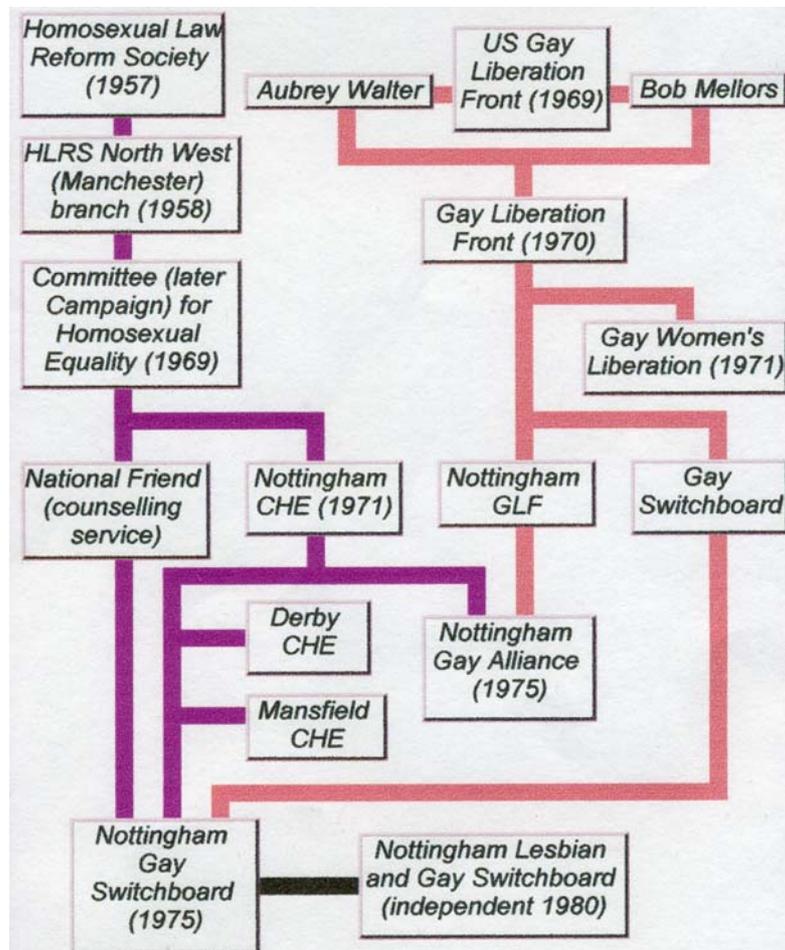
CHE grew out of the Homosexual Law Reform Society (HLRS) which was formed in 1957. In the late 60s the HLRS had run out of steam and its Manchester branch took up the baton. It renamed itself the Committee (later Campaign) for Homosexual Equality. A law lecturer in Nottingham, Ike Cowen, drafted its constitution

Soon, CHE branches were formed across England. On 16th November 1971 Nottingham CHE was formed. The founding father was Ike Cowen

Another figure in CHE was Ray Gosling, a Nottingham journalist, who was CHE's Vice President. Through Ray and Ike's influence, the 1977 CHE Conference was held in Nottingham. It received press hostility over a guest speaker: a Dutch doctor who had studied paedophilia.

## Campaign trails

Until 1967, male homosexuality was illegal. The 1967 Sexual Offences Act gave limited equality. Gay sex was permitted in private homes between 2 consenting men over 21, as long as no one else was present on the premises. Gay sex in hotels and isolated public locations was illegal. Many campaigning groups were formed. This was the start of the modern gay rights movement. Here is the story of two campaigning groups in Nottingham.



In 1974 Nottingham CHE set up a lesbian and gay Switchboard. Switchboard became independent in 1980 and though CHE has gone, Switchboard is still in operation (despite Rushcliffe Primary Care Trust's proposal to withdraw funding in 2006). Nottingham hosted the annual conference of the National Association of Gay Switchboards in 1980 and 1985.

## Gay Liberation Front (GLF)

Nottingham born Bob Mellors co-founded the UK GLF with Aubrey Walter. They met in New York while demonstrating with the US GLF in 1970. On their return, they organised the UK GLF on October 13th 1970 in London.

The GLF's campaign methods relied on attracting attention and publicity. Another method was "radical drag", men in women's clothing but still clearly men. Nottingham student Kris Kirk was attracted by "radical drag" and became one of Nottingham GLF's most charismatic members. So much so, that when he left for a career in journalism, the group faded away.

In 1975 CHE and GLF formed the city's only gay street theatre group, Nottingham Gay Alliance.

The GLF was behind the first national gay switchboard, national gay newspaper and London Pride March.

## LGBT HISTORY PROJECT

In the last QB, the Nottinghamshire's Rainbow Heritage LGBT history project (NRH) made a request for individuals, groups and organisations to loan (or even donate) literature, photos and memorabilia which would help develop the story of LGBT Nottinghamshire.

Since then NRH has received:

A complete set of GEM (Gay East Midlands)  
A copy of "Jenny lives with Eric and Martin", the book used as a lever for introducing Section 28  
Designs for the never-completed Outhouse Centre as well as the Outhouse mug and door plaque  
A large number of LGBT-related badges  
Photos of the now-defunct Real Art Café and of the Pavilion Club

NRH has been promised:

Old copies of many (all?) editions of Lookout and Outright magazines.  
City Council freebies produced for various Prides

... and the Women's Centre has alerted us to material which has recently emerged from under dust in their library.

Via questionnaires filled in during LGBT History Month, over 40 people have added their names to NRH's e-mail list either just to be kept informed about the project or to get involved in various ways, for example in developing publicity materials and a website or in conducting interviews.



If you've got treasures in the attic, let us know. If you would like to be interviewed, let us know. If you want to know what NRH is doing, let us know.

It will take perhaps a couple of months to get used to our recording equipment and get people trained in using it, in interview techniques and in the ethics of using the materials we gather - our "timeline" has interviews scheduled to begin towards the end of April.

The contact details for Nottinghamshire's Rainbow Heritage are on the back page of QB.

## COUNCILS AND US - THEN & NOW

Our relationships with various Councils have been uneven - though where problems occur, it is usually because of individual councillors, rather than the Council as a whole.

In 1977, after writing to Peter Wright, the leader of the Conservative Group, Nottingham CHE received a reply which said "I have always regarded homosexuality as one form of perversion and I very much regret the progress on permissive lines that have taken place during the last few years. I also take exception to the use of the word "gay". From time to time I am gay, but at no time queer."

On a positive note, Lesbian and Gay Switchboard received its first grant from the Council in 1983. Elsewhere, things were less rosy. In 1984, Rugby Council declared that they would not employ homosexuals. In attempting to justify the move, a councillor said "We would not employ a known rapist in the typing pool". In 1986, Staffordshire Tory Councillor Bill Brownhill said that all gays should be gassed.

In Nottingham, however, Lesbian and Gay Council sub-committees had been set up because of pressure from out gay Councillor Richard McCance. A gay man and a lesbian were employed in the Equal Opportunities department to support LGBT issues. On coming to power in 1988, the Tories not only stopped the sub-committees, but they sacked the 2 employees and closed the whole Equal Ops unit.

Council grants dried up during the period that councils were terrified by Section 28. In March 1993 the OutHouse received an unsigned letter from a Councillor saying "You lot should be put down". This led to a march which passed through Hockley to the Council House carrying a black-draped coffin.

Since then, things have slowly improved. Switchboard and Pride are supported by both City and County Councils (see below). Both Councils have LGBT employees support groups and the City has an LGBT Consultation group. Nevertheless, we are aware that some Councillors and people in authority within the Councils put LGBT issues at the bottom of the diversity hierarchy, seem embarrassed at having to deal with us and some have stated that money spent on support for LGBT issues is money wasted.



## IT'S DIVORCE

One of New York's most famous gay couples has split up.



Silo and Roy, two male chinstrap penguins, have been living together as husband and husband for the past six years (See QB no. 39).

However, when Scrappy, a single female arrived from Sea World Zoo in San Diego, Silo's eye went wondering and he moved out of his and Roy's nest and moved in with Scrappy

## BURSTING OUT ON DVD

**Outburst** is the social/support group for LGBT people under 26. Outburst's promotional film is now available free for young people and professionals alike, showing what we do, how we do it and why. Length about 10 minutes, format DVD movie. Contact us to get a copy!

Contact Outburst on 07940 761160 or [davina.daniels@nottinghamcity.gov.uk](mailto:davina.daniels@nottinghamcity.gov.uk)

Davina Daniels  
Outburst Worker for the Youth Service  
Nottingham City Council  
2nd Floor Central Library, Angel Row, NG1 6HP  
M: 07940 761160 T: 0115 9152882

## THT NOTTINGHAM

The **Terrence Higgins Trust** has recently opened a branch in Nottingham. The essence of their service is explained by their main aim:

"Whatever your sexuality, HIV status, gender, cultural background or ethnic origin, THT has services set up with your needs in mind. If you're affected by HIV, then we'll try to help."

You can contact them at

Terrence Higgins Trust  
Lace Market House  
54-56 High Pavement, Lace Market  
Nottingham, NG1 1HW.  
Telephone: 0115 882 0121  
Email: [info.nottingham@tht.org.uk](mailto:info.nottingham@tht.org.uk)

## NOTES AND QUEERIES

Gays cause climate change. The evidence is irrefutable.

In November 2005 **Maurice Mills**, a councillor for the Democratic Unionist Party in Northern Ireland, blamed the gay community for Hurricane Katrina, which devastated New Orleans. He said "The media failed to report that the hurricane occurred just two days prior to the annual homosexual festival, which the previous year had attracted an estimated 125,000 people."

The **Rt. Rev Graham Dow**, the Bishop of Carlisle, claimed that floods that caused chaos and death in 2007 across the UK were caused by God after he was provoked by the introduction of gay equality via the Goods and Services Act.

**Shlomo Benizri**, who is a member of the ultra-Orthodox Shas party, was speaking in Israel's Knesset (parliament) debate on earthquake preparedness.

After reading passages from the Old Testament, he said that in his view one cause of earthquakes is that "the Knesset gives legitimacy to sodomy. A cost-effective way of averting earthquake damage would be to stop passing legislation on how to encourage homosexual activity in the State of Israel, which causes earthquakes."

Of course, it's possible that they are all bonkers. On the other hand, this gives another slant to "did the Earth move for you?" and raises questions about why they are having earthquakes in Lincolnshire.

## GROUP OF THE DAY

**Bi-delight** has been set up to enable bi couples and singles in Nottingham to meet on a regular basis.

The group is mainly couples who have come to terms with the fact that either both or one of the other is bi. The group is small but growing, and is made up mainly of couples who prefer to accept and allow each other to express the bi side of their life without having to hide it away. We are now trying to grow the group and allow singles to join us. However, we do not encourage one half of a couple to explore their bi side. We prefer couples to discuss and open up their bi side in an adult and understanding way.

Bi-delight is looking to hold regular social events throughout the year, perhaps monthly or more regular if there is a demand. Bi-delight prefers to communicate through email: our contact email is

[bi-delight69@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:bi-delight69@yahoo.co.uk)

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  
 \*\*\*\*\*  
 Healthy Gay Nottingham  
 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  
 \*\*\*\*\*  
 Police Homophobic Crime Helpline  
 0800 085 8522  
 \*\*\*\*\*  
 Nottinghamshire's Rainbow Heritage  
 c/o NVAC, 7 Mansfield Road,  
 Nottingham NG1 3FB.  
 0115 9349529  
 NottsRH@hotmail.co.uk

**SOME LOCAL LISTINGS**

- Breakout Social group for gay & bisexual men. Tuesdays 7.30 pm (at the Health Shop) Contact Switchboard or HGN or go to [www.breakoutnottm.org.uk](http://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 HGN.
- 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 local groups can be obtained from Switchboard:

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

Switchboard has an accommodation file: if you are seeking flat/house share or have accommodation to offer, contact us; the service is free.

**DIARY**

**TO BE STRAIGHT WITH YOU**

A multi-ethnic cast explore tolerance, intolerance, religion and sexuality in "To be straight with you". DV8's new show is based on hundreds of hours of audio interviews collected throughout the UK with people directly affected by these issues. 'The persecution of people because of their sexual orientation is every bit as unjust as that crime against humanity, apartheid. We must all be allowed to love with honour.'

**Nottingham Playhouse** 11th/12th April.  
 To find out more go to [www.dv8.co.uk](http://www.dv8.co.uk)

**QUEER UP NORTH**

After sorting out their funding problems, **Queer up North** returns. Challenging stereotypical notions of 'queer', the festival has embraced every conceivable art form, pushing at the frontiers of creativity and sexuality.

Expect the very best in theatre, film, music, dance, live art, comedy, cabaret, burlesque, visual art and literature from across the globe - various times & venues in Manchester. May 9th - 25th.

Tel: 0161 234 2942 [www.queerupnorth.com](http://www.queerupnorth.com)

**BIRMINGHAM PRIDE**

Everevent has plans to take the Festival to the next level; a City-wide festival over 2 weeks, celebrating all that is Queer (LGBT) and culminating in a spectacular weekend of activities. Opening 24th/25th May.

Tel: 07870 899 373 [www.birminghampride.org](http://www.birminghampride.org)

**THE ROYAL CENTRE**

There's nothing like a gay icon - thank goodness, some may say. One such icon - **Liza Minelli** - arrives in Nottingham this May (will she turn up - definitely .... will she fall off the stage - we certainly hope not).

Friday 30th May 2008 7.30 pm at the Royal Concert Hall.

**BLACKPOOL PRIDE**

**Blackpool Pride** is taking over the resort's North Pier for the Saturday celebrations. Market and Lifestyle Stalls will line the length of the pier leading up to a variety of attractions and entertainments at the end. 17th -18th May 2008.

Tel: 07926 116584 for details.