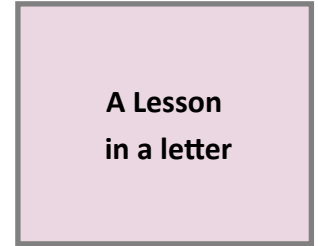
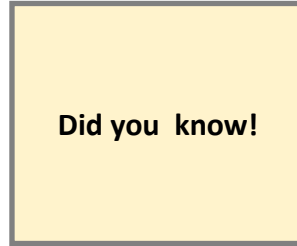


Gay West

A way of keeping in touch!

Top stories in this Newsletter

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A very TUTTI FRUTTI LIFE

Drug addiction, cross-dressing, 'wonderful' bisexual orgies, and voyeurism — Little Richard indulged himself royally and wasn't shy about it.

The icon, who has died aged 87, inspired generations of musicians with his breathtakingly energetic music and sexual ambiguity—that wailing, falsetto voice-over frenzied piano playing, one leg hoisted up on the frame, as he assaulted the keys on hits such as Good Golly Miss Molly, Tutti Frutti and Lucille.

Following his death on Saturday 9th May from cancer, Mick Jagger hailed him as 'the biggest inspiration of my early years'. Paul McCartney said: 'Without Little Richard there would have been no Beatles.' However, it wasn't just his music that inspired so many stars but also his exotic, gender-bending persona.

In his early career, he would dress up for performances as either the Queen of England (or at least his interpretation of Her Majesty) or the Pope. At one concert in Britain he played dead on stage, prompting the management to call for medical help— before springing up to continue performing.

Little Richard's private life was similarly convulsive. Even claiming that he had a threesome with fellow rock 'n' roll star Buddy Holly.

He often said he felt distinctly feminine and was brutally punished by his father after he was caught wearing his mothers clothes and make up. Around this time he joined a local gospel choir but was thrown out thanks to his screaming vocals.

By his early teens he was enjoying relationships with both sexes and following a bust up with his father when he announced he was bi-sexual he left home. He was 15.

This was the time that he started performing with touring troupes and at Georgia drag clubs, where wearing what would become his trademark thick pancake make up and lacquered pompadour, he called himself Princess Lavonne.

Fame and success allowed Richard to give full rein to his voracious, and weird, sexual appetite. He loved watching other people have sex while he pleased himself. In 1955 he was arrested for 'Lewd conduct' after a petrol station attendant spotted him in a car watching another couple having sex. He did have girlfriends but most importantly Audrey Robison —aka 'Angel'. A pretty nude model and stripper, her main function was to draw a lot of handsome guys for him.

Although he was inundated with naked photos and phone numbers from female fans they were chiefly a prop for his sexual interest in men. He would later say that he had been 'gay all his life.

His later years consisted of drink and drug abuse as well as his obsession with orgies and by 1972, he was a cocaine addict using up most of his income. In 1977 he was almost shot dead for failing to pay up his drug abuse debts. After this he returned to God and became a traveling Bible salesman. He declared his homosexuality was wrong and condemned his dissipated sexual encounters as 'satanic acts'.

Richard never had any children of his own but adopted a son, Danny, after the latter's mother died.

Little Richard leaves a legacy of the man who started rock and roll and what we now call the origins of the modern pop music. His hits have been covered by many artists and include Tutti Frutti, Long Tall Sally, Lucille, Jenny, Good Golly Miss Molly and Keep A-Knocking.

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A way of keeping in touch!

A gay PC - when being Gay wasn't PC

Stephen Bourne remembers EM Forster's lover, who befriended the Bloomsbury Group and inspired Dixon of Dock Green

Hardly any documentation exists about 'Lily Law'. That was the gay slang for police officers who were homosexual and served before the 1967 Sexual Offences Act partially decriminalised homosexuality.

An exception is PC Harry Daley's autobiography, "This Small Cloud", published posthumously in 1986. Humorous, endearing and self deprecating, Daley acknowledged himself as a champion of the underdog and the oppressed. His ruthless self improvement led to his book, a rare record of working-class gay experience. In it, Daley (1901 - 1971) is refreshingly indiscreet about his homosexuality and life as a London bobby on the beat. Regrettably he doesn't discuss the love affair he had with the celebrated novelist EM Forster (1879 - 1970) who has just featured in the Sky Arts programme E M Forster : His Longest Journey. In fact, because Daley fell out with Forster, he avoids mentioning the friends he made in London's literary and artistic world of the famous Bloomsbury Group in the 1930s.

Daley was born in Lowestoft, Suffolk, in 1901 into a close-knit, working-class family. His father, the skipper of a fishing smack, was lost at sea in the Lowestoft shipping disaster of 1911. Daley's older brother, known as Joseph, served in the First World War and was tragically killed in action just a few days before the war ended.

When the family moved to Dorking in 1916, Daley worked as a grocery delivery boy but he craved the bright lights of London. He spent his weekends in the metropolis, exploring theatres, cinemas, art galleries and concert halls.

He was 24 when he decided to join the Metropolitan Police and make London his permanent home. In his autobiography, Daley describes himself at this time as 'sexually both innocent and deplorable; honourable if not exactly honest; trusting; truthful; romantic and sentimental to the point of sloppiness'.

In his 1978 biography of Forster, PN Furbank describes the young policeman as 'plump, curly-headed, genial and rather cocky in manner: very intelligent, with a taste for music and opera, and a brilliant raconteur.' He was homosexual and made no secret of it; indeed he was wildly indiscreet. His closest friends, and lovers, were mainly criminals.'

At work, Daley was open about his sexuality. Wendy Moffat, another Forster biographer, describes his fellow officers making a 'clear distinction between the behaviour of one of their own and the "nancy boys" brought into the station on charges of soliciting. These men were routinely harassed and humiliated. Their faces were rubbed with toilet paper to detect make-up.'

Meanwhile, says Moffat, Daley 'endured oblique slights: a knothole in the main office wall was graffitied to Look like an anus, and "love from 308" - Daley's badge number - was pencilled below. But, on the whole, Daley was let be.'



Did You Know

Scientists around the world who have been studying viruses like COVID-19 have discovered that all types of Coronaviruses rise to their peak of infection in about 40 days then drop away to no infections by the 70th day. This has been the case in all different countries and environments even as now when in a lockdown or not.

The last Pandemic, believe it or not, was the 1968 Swine flu outbreak which saw a death rate of 80,000 in the UK.

In 2014/2015 winter just over 28,000 died from the normal seasonal flu outbreak in the UK.

Good News/bad News is our 24 hour continuous roll out of information to much?

Information source BBC Focus Magazine.

GayWest Members

now have a WhatsApp Group and a Zoom Virtual Rainbow Café Group.

To join the WhatsApp group, Download the App and then search for GW WhatsApp Group then follow instructions.

The Zoom Virtual Café, contact us at

info@gaywest.org.uk to inform us that you wish to be included, by the Wednesday prior to the meet-up.

Membership *If you received a reminder with this newsletter, you can pay on-line Standing Order or by cheque, as your support is very much appreciated.*

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‘He was an exception, happily engaged in unlawful acts while upholding the law’

In 1925, on his Hammersmith beat, Daley encountered J R Ackerley, whose acclaimed play *The Prisoners of War*, set in the First World War, was then running at the Lyric, Hammersmith. Censors had failed to identify the homosexual theme of the play. Ackerley went out to fetch a milk bottle from his doorstep and came back inside with young Daley whom he had found walking the beat. The homosexual theme of Ackerley's play had intrigued Daley and the two men enjoyed a long-lasting, intimate friendship.

When Ackerley became a talks producer at the BBC, he arranged for Daley to give a series of talks about his life as a policeman and the work of Lowestoft fishermen.

As the 'human face' of the British bobby in these BBC radio broadcasts, including *Children's Hour* (1929) and *While London Sleeps* (1929), Daley may have inspired the writer Ted Willis to create PC, later Sergeant, George Dixon, the friendly copper who pounded the beat in BBC TV's popular drama series, *Dixon of Dock Green* (1955 - 1976).

It was in the summer of 1926 that Ackerley introduced Daley to Forster and they became lovers. It turned out to be a troubled relationship. Ackerley and Forster introduced the young policeman to members of the Bloomsbury Group, including writers, intellectuals and artists. In 1931, wearing his uniform, he was painted by the artist Duncan Grant.

Daley, it turned out, was too indiscreet for the closeted Forster and the Bloomsbury Group. Forster was so alarmed by Daley's lack of discretion, and his friendships with rough lads from the criminal underworld, that the couple broke up in 1932.

In "This Small Cloud", Daley relates how, during the London Blitz, at the police station and section house in Soho's Beak Street, officers were looked after by Mrs Fisher, a Jewish publican's wife. He describes how her 'motherly hands' made nice things for the officers to eat, and they grew fond of her. 'How can Hitler and Mosley have made such headway when there must have been Mrs Fishers all over the world for everyone to see?' he writes. Terrorised by the air raids, the Fishers were invited by Daley to share the officers' reinforced basement. However, some of the officers, described by Daley as 'Fascists', complained, and the Fishers were forced to go to the public air-raid shelter. An angry Daley confronted his fellow officers about this, and soon found himself unpopular.

As the London Blitz intensified, Daley found himself at the centre of it. 'When all available firemen and ambulances were engaged on the big disasters,' he recalls, 'we managed without help as best we could - one bomb, one copper.'

He writes movingly about the young policemen he befriended at the Beak Street section house who were given permission to leave and join the armed services: 'The first away were killed almost as soon as they could be trained... An atmosphere of horror now developed, with our friends gaily saying goodbye ... news of their death following almost automatically.' In 1941, Daley moved to Wandsworth. By then he had been promoted to sergeant. He recalls, 'Wandsworth was full of lively, good-looking people who thought nothing of telling policemen to go and get stuffed... It was a marvellous place and I couldn't see myself making many arrests here.' But the horrors of the Blitz were never far away. Daley describes how a landmine killed 27 women and children in a surface shelter. He found himself at the scene, holding a handbag, which was heavy with congealed blood. Daley discovered that it contained a sailor's address and a note that said, 'If anything happen to me, let my son no.'

Daley retired from the Metropolitan Police in 1950 and joined the merchant navy as a master-at-arms. He died in 1971; his ashes were scattered on Box Hill. In the days when gay officers had to conceal their sexuality, Daley was an exception, happily engaged in unlawful acts while upholding the law. At the same time, his colleagues made fun of him and acted as agents provocateurs against homosexuals. A fitting testament to Daley's popularity with the public came from a Gypsy traveller. During an altercation with two policemen, he told them that all coppers were bastards. He added, as an after thought, 'Except Sergeant Daley.' The Oldie December 2019 17

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A way of keeping in touch!

A Story That's a lesson to us all.

This is a story of a man I once knew who would have been 100 this month. A German Jew, Dietrich Hanff came to Britain as a refugee in 1939, aged 18. He was taken in by people who later became my friends a well known Artist Robin Tanner, and his Wife. Through charitable contacts, these wonderful people heard of the young man who needed his fare paid and employment to escape the Nazi terror. 'Dietrich' became their loving foster son. He had left behind his whole family. On April 2nd 1939, his parents wrote to him in England: Dearest....we took our coffee together, alone, without you....All day long we follow your journey in our thoughts'. Imagine their sadness while the swastika flags fluttered outside and the synagogues burned.

The next part of their letter is poignantly brave'. 'You are an intelligent, practical creature readily able to adjust to a new situation. Moreover you will certainly be welcomed and treated well....so cheer up: you will pull through. How I love that stalwart 'cheer up', Isn't it a lesson to us all?

Dietrich's dad went on: That we should find the parting unbearable and ourselves alone and bereft we don't need to tell you. We will make an effort to be brave as you urged us to be. God grant that your wish be fulfilled and that we may all soon, very soon, be reunited in peace and happiness.

It was not to be. For Dietrich's parents, grandparents, brothers, aunts, and uncles all perished in concentration camps.

Meeting him many years later, retired after a long teaching career, it was hard for me to reconcile his gentle, beaming face and generosity of spirit with the tragedy of his life.

But I thought of him recently when we celebrated VE day - because that (the vial totalitarian cruelty of the Nazis) was what we fought and defeated.

Much is asked of us in life. Of course, people face real problems including money, marriage and mortality, but how many have experienced heart rendering sacrifice like those German parents?

Or the desperate courage of an eighteen year old Dietrich (=,of course, to that of all the young men who went to war) who knew the terrible oppression, then left his homeland at the darkest time to find sanctuary in ours?

Then suffered agonising horror of hearing news of loss after loss... all of them?

So I just wish people could now try and keep things in perspective - for their own sakes. We too can pull through.

Please, let's stop grieving for cancelled holidays and all the other things that we have become to expect to have as a right. At least the vast majority of us have a chance of being reunited in peace and happiness this side of the grave.

Happy birthday, Dietrich

An Extract from a letter.....

The Editor.

The autobiography of PC Harry Daley
"This Small Cloud" by Stephen Bourne
First published in 1987