

# GayWest

A way of keeping in touch!

Top stories in this Newsletter

Vol. 5 July 2020



## The Three Café's....

### Siam Angel ...

We spent Christmas and New year 2018/19 on a cruise ship holiday where we met and became friendly with a Gay couple who owned a Café in the centre of Bristol. The Café became popular with many members of GayWest over the following year. The Café was:

The Siam Angle Café. As with many other Businesses during these last few months this has sadly closed for good.

### Buzz Café....

Also during 2019 we became friendly with the Buzz Café in Lockleaze when they wanted to set up a regular LGBT coffee morning on Tuesdays. Being a community funded establishment they have also now closed for good.

### GayWest's Rainbow Café Bath....

I have recently been in communication with Age UK Bath,

As you will be aware, many charities including Age UK Bath, are finding it hard to survive during these difficult times.

They are preparing all the background work, such as Risk assessments, to enable them and us to maybe open again in September, but we will have to wait and see, if this is possible, as soon as we know we will be in-touch with you all.

This has been the longest period without our Café since its beginnings back in 1983. But we will be back there soon.

Now the good news,

Lee and Tony, Siam Angle Café, sold their home in Bristol and bought a pub "The Kings Head " in Tenbury Wells Worcestershire which they are hoping to open by mid August ( more info on the Pub can be found on Google )

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## **A very sordid sex scandal.**

### **The peer and the Gangster, a very British cover-up:**

**By Daniel Smith. ( History Press £ 20.00p**

Lord Boothby slept with young men, consorted with the Krays, and had an affair with Macmillan's Wife— all the while protected by an Establishment desperate to avoid a scandal.

When a Sunday paper, tipped off by Scotland Yard, printed a story in 1964 about the illicit relationships between a member of the house of lords and an east end gangster Sir Robert Boothby immediately sued the paper.

Boothby for years had been going to boxing matches and underground night clubs owned by

the Kray Twins. He was just the sort of gent that appealed to Ronnie Krays sensibilities. What both men had in common was their shared love of sex with young men.

Often Boothby would take home a 17 year old then after a night together would accuse the boy of stealing items from him such as watches or even a cheque book at one point.

All to make him seem the victim. Boothby was a regular user of male Prostitutes often manipulating the law to stop them squealing. Also taking part in Orgies at the Krays home in Hackney. While all under the surveillance of MI5.

Should be a good read!

## **GayWest Prison Outreach work.**

GayWest first became involved in working with prisons in 2014, supporting the GBT community and objectives of the prison's Diversity & Equality team, at HMP Ashfield. Our 'Community Outreach' team is now proactively working with four men's prisons in the South West, giving visibility, influencing change, and helping to support often vulnerable GBT prisoners. Working directly with the prison's Diversity & Equality officers and occasionally the Probation service, we attend LGBT meetings and other events, including Prides, support individual prisoners with social visits, and offer sometimes vital local support when they're resettling back into the community.

In 2020, GayWest will reach its fifth decade.

The group is again growing and now has over 100 members, a proud achievement in our modern world. Planned events to celebrate these 50 years have been delayed by the Covid 19 pandemic, as have our regular social events, however our members have instead been able to keep in touch by using our new WhatsApp group. GayWest will continue to provide a space for LGBT people to make friends, socialise and maybe find lasting partners.

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**Don't Forget !** When trying to gain access to our website, to follow the instructions carefully, i.e. **only use the Membership Number and Password from GayWest. Other combinations will not work.**

**This is done for your security**

**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](mailto: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.*

## TV Programmes to catch up on

### Welcome to Chechnya BBC4

A story about the way LGBT people are treated in the country. Appalling persecution of LGBT people and the organisation of gays helping them to flee the country A very sad story but a reminder of what is happening in countries that want to banish gays.

## On a more happier note....

### The BBC's Imagine series....

" This house is full of Music"

(A portrait of the gifted musical Kanneh-mason family) recorded while the whole family along with a friend from music college, had been in their home during the Lockdown. For those of you who like your classical music this is a brilliant programme.

**I have just watched the BBC's Jenny Hill reporting on COVID precautions being taken by football teams in Germany, and she said that Eintracht Frankfurt will be disinfecting their balls at half-time.**

**No wonder the infection rate in the UK is so high; we are only told to wash our hands.**

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## HE MADE IT ALL UP!

Famously known as Perry Mason and Ironside in the late 60's into the 70's TV show the Actor Raymond Burr had his own hidden story to tell.

Raymond William Stacy Burr was born on May 21st 1917 in New Westminster, British Columbia, Canada. He was a chubby baby, exhibiting even then the ample girth that would both help and haunt him for the rest of his life.

By the age of 22 he had never been in a relationship, noticed by all the gossips. Burr met his first and only wife, Isabella Ward in 1943, they married in January 1948, he was 30. The Marriage collapses within months. Bella as she was known said quoted as saying “ some people are just not marring types” and I think that I am one of them.



During his career the story goes that he had done military service and had battle wounds, had married twice, had a son, who died aged 10 from Leukaemia, that he was married to a Scottish actress Annette before meeting Isabella and she had died in a plane crash.

He kept up these stories so as not to harm his successful acting career, to admit you were gay in Hollywood in the 50's and 60's would mean you were dropped as an actor.

Raymond Burr met his long-time partner when he was on the set for Perry Mason in 1957 an actor and a Korean war veteran 13 years his junior, Robert Benevides, known as Bob. In 1960 the couple set up home and they remained together for 33 years until Raymond died on September 12th 1993 aged 76. leaving his entire \$32million estate to Benevides and excluding his Sister and the rest of his family. A challenge by several of them against the will failed.

The man who told so many lies about himself should still be remembered with compassion because of the intolerant times in which he lived. And for the brilliance of his acting. That today is still admired.

*Written 15 years after his death this definitive biography “Hiding in plain sight “*

*The secret life of Raymond Burr by Michael Seth Starr.*

## Picnic Time

**To try and start up some GayWest events to slowly get us out and about again and take advantage of some of the summer season Jim and Myself were thinking of having a small picnic somewhere within the Bath and Bristol area. This will not be the normal GayWest annual picnic which now is postponed to next year. Just a small group get together on a day in August to be decided on.**

**If you are interested and have any ideas for the venue then can you please contact us as soon as you can so we can finalise the details. Contact us on [info@gaywest.org.uk](mailto:info@gaywest.org.uk) or by phone on 07758810134**

**Colin.**