

GayWest

A way of keeping in touch!



Hello and welcome to your June Newsletter. You may have noticed that this Month we have a few extra pages, something that we can do as a online newsletter.

Last Month on May 28th we had the 1st committee meeting this year and it was so good to get together again and feel like life was slowly getting back to how it was all those months ago. The meeting as always, was relaxed and productive and we welcomed Tony to his new Secretarial roll. As before members can request a copy of the minutes and also printed copies are at the “Rainbow Café”.

At the meeting we discussed the return of the GayWest Social evenings at “The Old Market Tavern” and hope to start the first one in July and continue on the second Thursday of each month thereafter. Also other events such as the creation of a Sunday lunch club at various venues until maybe we find a good venue to become a regular place. We will be having our GayWest picnic in August or September and other outings have been talked about. No firm dates for these have been agreed as yet but hopefully by July we can confirm dates and times.

The “Rainbow Café” is slowly coming alive again and we can now accommodate up to 30 people. Fingers crossed we can fully open as before very soon. The committee feel that the Café is a very important part of the group and being able to open during those dark months of the last year have been very beneficial to some of our more isolated members who have found that there was something to look forward to each month, now each week. Financially the café is not self sufficient until we can get back to 25/30 attendees on average every week. Or everyone is drinking many more coffees. But because the groups last two treasures have kept the finances on an even keel we are able to absorb the relevant costs at this time. As the saying goes, always put a little aside for a rainy day.

I would like to thank those who were brave enough to take part in the first of the Woodpecker Walk, that turned out to be a lovely days event for everyone. The debate as to whether it was a 4 and a half mile walk or twice this is still being discussed.

A new walk for July is being planned, see page 3.

Enjoy your newsletter. Colin.

You can send us your articles and comments / letters by email to info@gaywest.org.uk or post at 30, Woodpecker Close, Keynsham, BS31 2FU

We await them in anticipation !

Vol. 6 June 2021



GayWest events



Pure Luck

My Radio Recollections



GayWest

A way of keeping in touch!

Is Stonewall loosing the plot?

Stonewall have been in the news lately and not for all the right reasons. They have been accused of pushing the case for Transgender rights too far and of practicing a Woke agenda. Becoming intolerant to any one who disagrees with their programme of Transgender rights. A one sided political view is being promoted to the point that those who question their campaign are being so called "Cancelled".

You may have read or seen on the news media about this. Many Government Departments, Schools, Colleges and Universities are beginning to withdraw their contributions of an annual fee to Stonewall for its contribution in providing LGBT support and information for the workplace and institutions which Stonewall have done for many years. Last year alone Stonewall received £ 3.5 million for this information.

Like many other charities at the moment they seem to be managed by people who are less tolerant to other peoples views, this is a bad omen for all of our futures. Pushing the agenda of minority groups with little thought of those who may disagree or have different views on the subjects can cause resentment and be harmful to the those you are working hard to represent LGBT communities.

We in the LGBT community have a lot to be thankful for Stonewall's years of campaigning for our rights but this new approach could undo all this good work. Stonewall,

Be careful for what you wish for.

Colin.

Stonewall

Stonewall has been upsetting some people and organisations with it's stance on Trans rights.

We at GayWest generally do not take sides but in this instance we wish to make it very clear that we treat all members of the LGBTQ community with the respect that they all deserve and accept them for who they are, and not what society might like them to be.

Up coming GW Events

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|-----------------------------------|--|
| Rainbow Café | every Saturday morning |
| Bristol Pride | 10th July 2021 |
| Gloucester Pride | 11th September |
| Old Market Tavern, | Social evenings date tbc. |
| GayWest Annual Picnic, | date tbc. |
| Sunday Lunches | Starting in July date tbc. |
| Woodpecker - Walking Group | Next walk in July, see page 3 contact Colin for more info. |

Important announcement.....

After many years working voluntarily for GayWest and the wider LGBT community, Jim and Colin are contemplating standing down from the committee, and you will have to start looking for replacements, to fill these posts, full training will be given to ease the transition.

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The first Woodpecker Walk Took place on a beautiful summers day Sunday 6th June 2021.

Eight members of GayWest and myself started out from our home on a circular disputed four and half mile walk which consisted of country lanes and ordinance survey footpaths across the fields. We passed through Queens Charlton a small hamlet with a few homes and a Church, believed to be homes for the local farm and maybe some of the Charlton Quarry workers of the past. We then reached a junction with a bench with commanding views of the local countryside. (See photo)



On our way to our next resting point the village of Woollard we past a farm side milk vending machine were you can purchase fresh Milk and Milkshakes for £1.30p. Woollard was one of the many villages on the river Chew that had its medieval bridge swept away during the 1968 floods that effected the whole of the Chew valley area, its also situated on the Monarch's way. From here we had to start the climb back up towards Keynsham across wonderful open meadows and through woodland then one last steep climb and another splendid view looking towards the village of Compton Dando followed by a gentle down hill slope along Charlton road to home. Plenty of Tea and Cake was then consumed by all while enjoying time in our garden.

I believe that everyone enjoyed the day and a special thankyou to my Hubby for suppling the refreshments
Colin

Book Reviews

The Secret life of Albert Entwistle

A Novel from Matt Cain.

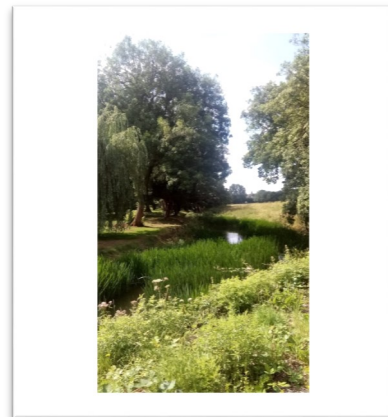
Sixty four year old Albert has been a Postman in the quite town of Toddington all his life, has lived alone since his Mum died 18 years ago. After a sudden loss one lonely Christmas and with his retirement looming Albert realises its time to look for George , the man that many years ago he lost—but never forgotten.

A heart warming and uplifting read. Out now

The Madness of grief.

By Rev Richard Coles.

The beautifully written, deeply personnel memoir about bereavement. When his partner David dies from the effects of alcoholism just before Christmas 2019 much about death takes Coles by surprise. A very personnel account revealing and often funny insight into love and loss.



Woodpecker Walk no 2

The next proposed walk will take place on Sunday July 18th starting at the usual time of 11am from our home in Keynsham.

This walk I promise to be no more than a gentle stroll of less than 4miles passing through Chewton Keynsham on to Compton Dando and back to Woodpecker Close. The walk follows the River Chew as it flows through the area to meet with the River Avon in the centre of Keynsham. Some hills to climb and uneven surfaces.

Please contact me for further information and to add your name to the walkers list. Colin

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PURE LUCK.

After receiving two mysterious phone calls. I decided to go out for an afternoon drive into the countryside taking my dog, a Kerry Blue called Horace with me. It was a beautiful day, everything looking fresh and green that I thought to myself how wonderful it was to be alive.

Soon after passing through a quaint hamlet, I espied two open ornate ironwork gates which I presumed led to a grand house, I found a convenient parking space and Horace and I decided to investigate.

The drive was badly overgrown with an assortment of wild flowers and on both sides of the drive stood majestic poplar trees which made a peaceful picture contrasting with the cloudless vivid blue sky.

It took us about fifteen minutes to reach the house which to my disappointment was not grand but just the opposite looking weather-worn, derelict in places not looking at all habitable, only for maybe squatters?.

I should have told you earlier that Horace is a well trained dog, I had taken him off his leash so that he could have a good sniff around at his leisure.

I was just going to find out if anybody was living in the house by using the bronze door knocker on the massive oak door when I could hear Horace barking and whining at the back of the double garage. This meant that he had found something for me to investigate, or had got trapped in an animal snare or something else!!.

I walked behind the garage and could see Horace standing in front of a large cedar tree barking at the blackness underneath the large branches, I knew then that Horace was not injured but had discovered something nasty. when Horace saw me approaching he stopped barking and ran backwards and forwards telling me something was amiss. I gingerly walked towards Horace's discovery rather apprehensive of what I might find. There underneath on the moist earth was a naked man with a bad gash above his left eye, I think he was in his early thirties with black hair, a droopy black moustache and a thick black hairy chest, quite a turn on despite his injury. I felt his pulse and realized he was still breathing but he was very cold.

I told Horace to stay where he was and dashed back to the car where I knew that I had a thick warm travelling rug which would become very useful in this instance.

Managing not to move him very much, was able to wrap the rug around him and then had to find a way to get into the house. I banged on the back door with no answer, tried the thick door handle and found it unlocked. I walked into a long scullery which led into a large kitchen and eventually located some living quarters. The interior of the house was quite tidy so someone must be living there?.

I moved back to the kitchen so I could make a lukewarm cup of tea for the young man hoping he would wake up giving me any details of why he was naked in the garden?.

In one of the bedrooms I discovered two pillows and with these I rested his head upon them, gradually opening his lips and poured a little liquid into his mouth and down his throat, he managed to finish all of the tea and after a few minutes he opened his eyes giving a slight smile as if he was glad that someone had found him. I told him not to move because he had a gash above his left eye and I also knew that moving somebody who had an accident can sometimes be dangerous.

After a little while he said that he felt well enough to return to the house and back in warmer surroundings. I helped him to his feet, he was a bit unsteady due to lying in one position for a long time but between us we reached the safety of the house.

Eventually he told me why he was naked. His name was Donald and always walked naked anywhere in the house because he now lived alone due to his lover of ten years had recently died from Aids and no-one would see him naked.

Whilst in the kitchen that morning he had heard a strange noise coming from the area of the cedar tree and being so intent in locating the noise that he had forgotten that one of the branches was lower than the others and he had walked into it, saw stars and passed out until I came to his assistance.

Whilst he was telling me this explanation of his accident he was donning a pair of white Levi jeans and a pale blue t-shirt. He was so pleased to speak to someone especially someone who had found him that he asked me to have dinner with him the following evening so that he could show me his appreciation of what I had done for him of which I accepted.

He told me that he would be alright to be on his own that night, making sure that his injury would get the best treatment from himself as he was a doctor and would look forward to seeing me again and by all means bring Horace as he was very fond of dogs.

Gay West

A way of keeping in touch!

Pure Luck cont.

I told him that my name is Charles and we said our goodbyes, I shook his hand but he gave me a French kiss which I did not expect due to the circumstances.

While walking back to the car with Horace I was thinking that I was glad that I was in the area at that precise time otherwise we would have not met and he could have died!!.

I was looking forward to meeting Donald the next evening because something might materialize but I was not banking on anything. I was counting the hours, minutes and seconds when I would meet this delightful man again not knowing what would occur!!.

When I reached Donald's house several lights were on giving it a warm appearance and Donald was standing outside the oak front door dressed in white trousers and an open necked cream silk shirt with a flowered cravat waiting to greet me and Horace.

He must have seen us coming up the drive from one of the windows. He gave Horace a friendly pat and told me that Horace had a special meal waiting for him in front of the log fire. If it had not been for Horace this meeting would not have developed.

We gave each other a lingering French kiss and after he took my jacket offered me an aperitif. We sat on the chaise longue and gazed into each other's eyes. We had a candle lit meal well relaxed and after the second glass of white wine he invited me to spend the remainder of the evening and the night together which I naturally accepted.

We retired quite late and cuddling each other and fell into a deep sleep awakened by Horace licking one of my feet indicating he wanted to go out. This awoke Donald and being a gentleman let Horace out and returned for a real sexy session.

One could not realize that Donald had an accident the day before because he was so lively as if nothing had occurred.

We had not known each other that long and being together all evening and all night it felt to us that we had known each other for a very long time.

Our friendship blossomed and after six months I sold my house and moved in with Donald. Since then one would not recognize the house etc. we have transformed everything to its original state, Horace sleeps wherever he wants to and Donald and I spend as much possible time together despite him being a doctor.

There is only a slight scar above his left eye and every anniversary of that eventful afternoon we have a candle lit meal and something special for Horace.

If anybody out there reads this story and it happens to them, go for it!!!!

Stuart Fairbrother.

28-05-21

The Rainbow Cafe

Under government regulations from the 17th of May

we can now have a maximum of 30 persons abiding by the rule of six.

booking your place will still be essential,

It will still remain table service only

so contact us by email info@gaywest.org.uk or text or telephone

07758810134

So book your table and support your Café and have a great time

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My Radio Recollections

I remember listening to our 'Wireless Set' when I was about five, in 1937. It was bulky, not mains powered because we had no electricity, only gas, for lighting and cooking. The wireless had a large 'High Tension Battery' giving 100 volts (dangerous) an 'Accumulator' which was a glass container full of sulphuric acid (nasty), giving 2 volts, it needed to be charged weekly at a radio shop, and a Grid Bias Battery, 9 volts.

My father introduced me to a 'Crystal Set' which needed no power supply, just an aerial 20 feet long in the garden. I constructed one, it had a crystal of galena, a 'Cat's Whisker' - a wire that rested against the crystal, a coil of wire and headphones, as the signal was quite faint.

What did we listen to? It was either the Home Service, or the Light Programme.

Radio broadcasts began in 1922 from Savoy Hill in London, then a year later, it came from the newly built Broadcasting House. It was called the British Broadcasting Company, soon becoming the British Broadcasting Corporation - the BBC.

A Wireless Licence was required, costing 10 shillings a year, in 1923.

I remember the main broadcasters: The Radio Doctor, with his homespun advice, Mr Middleton, who gave us gardening tips. There were many more, mostly regulars, light music, by Henry Hall and his band, with guests, and other entertainers, church services, and musical concerts. The announcers, it is said, dressed formally when addressing the microphone.

During the war, the BBC was vital, it provided news bulletins, up to ten a day, both for us, and for those in countries occupied by the Germans. To possess a radio in such countries to listen to the BBC, was extremely dangerous. There were no weather forecasts, these might assist the enemy.

I remember The Brains Trust, originally called Any Questions, it was a panel of four highly knowledgeable men : Robert Boothby, Dr Joad, Gilbert Harding, and Dr Bronowsky, they responded to listeners' questions. I also remember the comedian Tommy Handley in 'It's That Man Again' or ITMA, he kept us amused by lampooning Adolf Hitler.

There was a weekly periodical called The Radio Times, that listed all the programmes and cost 2d., it now costs about £2. It was described as The official organ of the BBC. In 1943 General de Gaulle who had escaped from France, broadcast in French from London to a huge audience of 100 million, throughout Europe. It was extremely dangerous to be caught listening our programmes.

On January 1st. 1951, a programme called 'The Archers' commenced, it was intended to provide advice to farmers and was described as 'a social play of country folk'. The Archers were Dan Archer, his wife Doris, and their adult children Philip and Christine. Needless to say, it still survives, after 70 years.

In 1946, Alistair Cooke broadcasted from New York a programme called 'Letters from America', the programme, to sound spoken, not read. It was extremely interesting and lasted until 2004.

The BBC does a lot more besides, far too much to mention here. Compare the present Radio to the original in 1922. So much progress! Such a choice of programmes!

Vive le BBC ! BBC Television , ah that's another story.

Ernie.