

GayWest

A way of keeping in touch!

Vol. 10 October 2021

Welcome to your October Newsletter.

From our last A.G.M. we were looking forward to celebrating GayWest's 50th year then five weeks before the event we had to close up the "Rainbow Café" this then became the longest period that the Café had ever been closed.

But the new Gaywest year, September 2019 – September 2020 did not see the team sitting back idle or its member's vanishing there was a special 2020 GayWest Calendar to celebrate our 50th year and the Sales raised £500, this was donated to the Bristol Prospect, our local Prostrate Support Group.

We had our Christmas party at the Café and were planning our events for the New Year, so then came the first Lockdown in March 2020.

Now that the team could not meet, we kept InTouch via email and the question was how can we keep in touch with our members and help in any way. After some discussion amongst the team and some members the GayWest WhatsApp group was launched in April 2020, then in May we had our first virtual café on Zoom set at 11am on Saturday mornings, (**now still every week on a Wednesday evening**). So the fun and chat still continues, also we were able to help members who wanted to contact other members by letter or phone. This was found to be very helpful to some of our single members.

As we could not get the Magazine printed we decided to run a short monthly Newsletter from home, and to our surprise this took off and now continues, replacing the previous magazine format.

Here I would like to say a huge thankyou to all you members for the support to not just us on the committee via the very thoughtful emails of thanks, and the very generous financial donations to the group from some members which has allowed us to be able to open the Café when we did. Opening the Café after it closed in March 2020 was a mammoth task consisting of many emails back and forth followed by form filling etc. etc. which included supplying risk assessments. What finally made it possible was that the Government allowed support groups for minorities that included LGBT organisations to be able to meet under certain restrictions. So as GayWest is classed as a Support and Social group we came into that category and were able to open in October 2020.

From October the Café opened once a month until May 2021 when it was back to weekly and then from July 24th without restrictions, back to normal.

Through all these past strange months the group has maintained its membership levels and has many new members that have joined us during this time.

Obviously many events such as the prides and the groups outreach work has been curtailed during this time, we did manage a visit to Bristol Prison last month to attend their Pride event so things slowly getting back to normal. However we did cancel our visit to Gloucester Pride early this Month due to lack of support from within our group.

There will be many challenges going forward as always and the group will need a dedicated and resourceful committee to steer GayWest into the future and all that will entail.

Colin



GayWest events

GayWest
Annual General
Meeting



GayWest At
Christmas

Lesbian
Stories

GayWest

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GayWest events

GayWest Annual Picnic



The return of our wonderful GayWest Picnic happened on the 12th \September, meeting in Bath's Royal Victoria park on a beautiful late summers day. I was expecting maybe 10 or 12 but the turnout was a wonderful 21. Some who we have not seen for some while. A lovely afternoon spent chatting and catching



Woodpecker Walk 3

Our third Woodpecker walk happened on Sunday September 19th. Seven of us set out at just after 11.15am for a short but contested 3 mile walk.

This walk took us in a clockwise circle though the centre of Keynsham on the way picking out the places of interest. The walk passed through Keynsham's small but pleasant park (Pictured left) where the river Chew flows along its edge.

Keynsham's past history was very industrial including Brass works ,Stone Quarrying and Lime making.

Famous people who grew up in Keynsham were Bill Bailey the son of Dr Christopher Bailey a well respected GP the family home was at the bottom of Wellsway. Horace Bachelor, and the Cricketer Marcus Trescothick and now and Jim! And myself!

Next walk hopefully in October.

Colin.

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2021 Annual General Meeting

The 2021 A.G.M. was held on Saturday 25th September and had a good attendance of 24 members. Last years meeting was cancelled so the present committee has been in place for the last two years. The meeting got started with the Chair's report covering the last two years, (See from the chair on front page) Then a final report from Jim the outgoing Treasurer.

Colin (Chairman) then thanked the outgoing committee for all their hard work over the past two difficult years and the committee then all stood down.

The members were then addressed by James Whatmore (Member) who then proceeded to announce the nominations that had been received and these were agreed on ,and seconded therefore duly electing a new committee for the year September 2021 to September 2022. There followed a question and answer period and then the meeting was closed.

So your newly elected committee for 2021/2022 is as below

Chairman, Rainbow Café host & co-ordinator, Newsletter editor. Website & ITColin O'Brien.
Membership SecretaryJim Phimister
Treasurer.....Brian Milligan
Minutes SectaryAntonio DeLezameta

We will be looking for other members to join us to help in any way they can, such as an events co-ordinator and help with other roles. So I would like to thank all of you who have put your faith in this new committee to run things smoothly over the next 12 months. So lets all look forward to a great new future with GayWest.

Colin GayWest Chairman.

Save the Date! GayWest's Members 50th Christmas

Join us on Friday December 10th at Your Rainbow Café to celebrate Christmas 2021 and 50 years of GayWest.

This will be a ticketed event and will be limited in numbers, so book early to avoid disappointment.

Starting at 7pm to 10pm you will enjoy a buffet meal. A fun quiz, Christmas jokes, complementary drink , Raffle and more..

Further information regarding how to obtain tickets will be sent out to all members in the coming weeks.

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Lesbian Stories

Throughout history, lesbians have fought for the rights of LGBT people in classrooms, courtrooms and in streets around the globe.

Here are some of the lesbian couples who helped change history.

The Daughters

Back in 1955 San Francisco, it was illegal to dance with someone of the same sex in public. Lesbian bars were also subject to raids, harassment and abuse.

To combat this, Lesbian couple Del Martin and Phyllis Lyon co-founded the first social and political organisation for Lesbians in the U. S., The Daughters of Bilitis. Del and Phyllis spent the next 50 years fighting for Gay Rights and were the first same sex couple to wed in California in 2008. just before Del passed away.



.The couple that took on the Defence of Marriage Act

Despite rejection and lack of support from LGBT groups, Mary Bishop and Sharon Baldwin refused to back down on their fight for same-sex marriage in Oklahoma.

Their landmark legal crusade lasted over a decade and went to the Supreme Court, eventually triggering the legalisation of same-sex marriage in several states and allowing the two women to get married



Early Activist

Born in 1899, Ruth Ellis was a prominent 'out' woman of colour and lived for an incredible 101 years.

She and partner Babe Franklin lived together as lovers as early as the 1920s, and Ellis became the first female to own a printing business in Michigan. Their home became a hang-out for African-American LGBT people in an era in which discrimination was rife.

The Ruth Ellis Centre was established in 1999 as a youth social services agency with a mission 'to provide short-term and long-term residential safe space and support services for runaway, homeless, and at-risk lesbian, gay, bi-attractional, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) youth.