

GayWest

A way of keeping in touch!

Vol. 1 January 2022

Welcome to your January 2022 newsletter. You may notice a change in the format which we hope you will like. Nothing like a good change every now and again.

It was the February magazine 2014 that I wrote my first blog as your Chairman what I said in that blog is forever recorded in the GayWest digital archive that was put together during the 2020 Lockdowns by your membership secretary, All Archives are also kept in their original form at the Bristol Archive centre.

Back then in October 2013 my predecessor resigned and the group had an E G M on November 30th 2013 when I was elected as Chairman so 2022 will be my 9th year as the group's chairman.

This has been an interesting time for the group and indeed as the group's Chairman, but with everything all things come to an end so this year (2022) I think in September when we next have our A G M it will be time for me to stand down and for the organisation to put some new blood into this role.

My other half, your membership secretary will also be standing down, someone has to look after me!

So this year we will be looking for those of you who would be interested in getting more involved with the groups affairs, (Especially our younger members). We have decided on this approach rather than get to September and then announce our intentions which would then throw things into chaos.

Anyone interested can come and join us on the present committee to get the feel of things. GayWest has a lot of IT that needs managing and understanding so I would not wish anyone to be thrown in at the deep end with this (training would be given). The idea would be to get the feel of life on our committee as an observer. Obviously anyone interested in these roles will have to put their names forward to a vote by members at the September A G M. Please contact me at info@gaywest.org.uk if you are interested.

Another area we are throwing open to all is GayWest events for 2022 more info on page 4

The photos of the 2021 Christmas affair can be viewed on the Gallery page of the website along with many more going back through the groups history. They can be saved on your device and printed out, so what are you waiting for have a look and enjoy the memories. To login to website go to www.gaywest.org.uk from the home page select gallery then in the top box type in your membership number, followed by the password in the box below. (If you need a reminder of your Membership No and Password), contact us on the usual info@gaywest.org.uk.

Colin

Page 2 **Kathleen Ferrier-Contralto**

Page 3 **The Flautist**

Page 3 **Film & Book reviews**

Page 4 **GayWest's 50th Christmas**

Page 4 **A Gay Drama**

Page 4 **2022 Events**

Gay West

A way of keeping in touch!

Kathleen Ferrier - Contralto

I have loved for many years her voice and her style of singing, she conveyed emotion which could move me to tears, and she was also very able in many other musical areas. She had a humble beginning to her so short career.

She was an ordinary Lancashire Lass, born on 22nd April 1912 in Higher Walton, near Preston. She had two older siblings, a sister, Winifred and a brother, George. The family moved to Blackburn in 1914, so that her father, a schoolmaster could become headmaster there. Music was the primary source of pleasure for her family.

Her voice was not Kathleen's first instrument, as she showed great talent for the piano, and was taught from the age of five by an excellent teacher, achieving a high standard by fourteen.

On leaving school at fourteen, she was employed as a telephone operator. Meanwhile, she entered many piano competitions, frequently winning them, and won an upright piano as a prize. Although her principal study was the piano, she sang frequently with her family. In 1934 she entered The Blackpool Festival as a singer and asked the choirmaster and organist to give her suggestions. At a competition in Carlisle in 1935, she entered as a contralto and won the the first prize of a rose bowl.

From then on, she became a professional singer. In 1942 she performed in Handel's Messiah, and after an audition with Malcolm Sargent, she moved to London and became a concert artist, performing at the Wigmore Hall, an important venue. Her repertoire now included Bach's St Mathews Passion and Elgar's Dream of Gerontius and a good deal more. Also, in 1942, she sang at Glyndebourne in Sussex with Peter Pears, the partner of Benjamin Britten, in an opera of his.

She performed in 1945 at several London Promenade Concerts. Then at the Edinburgh Festival; she also sang at many different places throughout the UK. then Europe, and eventually in America. She made world tours, becoming very well known. Her many recordings of songs became very popular and remain so.

In 1952, at the height of her fame, she was diagnosed with breast cancer and ordered, to her horror, no more work. However, she defied this and continued to perform, despite increasing pain. In 1953, she had surgery and radiotherapy, but to no avail. During one performance, her femur bone disintegrated, she struggled to continue, held up by the other performers, to the end.

She was awarded The Gold Medal of The Royal Philharmonic Society. She passed away shortly after, at the age of 42.

In 1953, it was said of her that year, she was very nearly the most popular woman in England, second only to the young Queen of England.

Ernie.

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The Flautist!

On a Monday evening back in mid December we were looking for something interesting to watch on TV, in spite of all the channels available nothing seems of any quality any more. However we went to one of our favourite channels Sky Arts and found that a new programme following the Andre' Rieu Orchestra at its concerts in Columbia.

For those of you who love the classics /opera and especially the Straus waltzes and have not yet seen or heard Andre' Rieu then please do so soon.

There have been a series of programs following this orchestra all over the world, this one was different though as half way through there was a power cut and the orchestra had to stop playing while the back stage crew try to find the problem. The audience started to sing amongst themselves and then all take part in the Mexican wave. Back stage the members of the orchestra were getting anxious about the time passing. Suddenly the crowd went silent and all you could hear was the sound of a solo flute being played. The cameras panned around the theatre to find where the sound was coming from, then appearing at the front of the upper tiers was a small boy playing a wooden flute beautifully. The audience started to cheer and clap including the orchestra. Then as suddenly as it went off the power came back on and so the concert restarted but this time there was someone new on stage. Andre' Rieu invited the young boy (who we found out was just 9 years old) to play along with the orchestra, the crowd went wild and it was just an amazing thing to see. There were 4 concerts at the venue and the lad was invited to the next days were Andre' Rieu presented the boy with a gift of a brand new quality flute. The boy was speechless and so pleased. So quite a different show than normal but everyone went home very pleased and many in tears after such an emotional event.

Look out for Andre' Rieu on Sky Arts channel quite often on Monday evenings.

Colin.

Film Reviews

Westside story

directed by Steven Spielberg. A second adaption of the 1957 stage musical and I have on good authority that it is just as brilliant as the original.

In Cinemas now.



Book Reviews

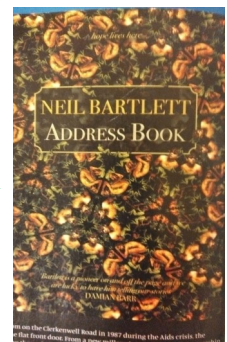
Address Book Neil Bartlett

No one captures intimacy longing and desire as Neil Bartlett. Address Book is a composed collection of connected short stories inspired by real places the Author has lived and known.

The opening story, 14 Yeoman's Mews, is a flashback to 1974. When a retired doctor moving home during the Pandemic drops a scrap of paper with the above address on it reminds him of when he was 15 and met an older man in the Toilets in Waterloo station.

The second story takes us to a bedroom in 1987, then to a new Millennium Lesbian civil partnership to erotic obsession in a Victorian tenement. Address Book journeys through decades of change.

Out now.



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GayWest 50th Christmas

On Friday 10th December a very good evening of jollity happened at “ The Rainbow Café” to celebrate Christmas 2021 and the past 50 years of the groups life. Every member who came along received the booklet “ A brief History of our time “ which looks back on the past 50 years of GayWest. Members received a glass of Red or White wine on entry or a soft drink. There was a lot of chat and laughter followed by a buffet.

A special Christmas hamper was the door ticket prize and a very special gift for the winner of the Christmas Quiz that everyone took part in. The usual cracker jokes were doing the rounds. There was a display of GayWest’s photos of past Christmas’s and a slide show of photos from the groups archives. A very pleasant evening for all.



Gay Killer drama finally screened.

Three years after the drama was filmed The BBC has been able to release the trailer.

The Drama, **Four Lives**, tells the story of the gay men killed by Stephen Port after he met them on line and gave them fatal doses of a date-rape drug. It had been set for release in 2020 but was delayed by an inquest into the Metropolitan police’s failings in the investigation into the murders in 2014 and 2015 in east London.

Stephen Merchant portrays Port, who was given a whole life sentence in 2016. Sheridan Smith stars as Sarah Sak, the mother of victim Anthony Walgate, 23, who wrote a book about her sons death.

The three-part drama by Neil McKay will run from January 3 on consecutive nights.

2022 Events

Events for 2022 will be in your hands, we are thinking of a new venue for the Monthly social evenings to start early in the new year. Continue the monthly Sunday lunches which were well received this year. February should see us making a trip to visit a Snowdrop display garden as local as possible The Woodpecker Walks will start again in late March.

At the Rainbow Café we hope to have more Raffles and maybe a long awaited fundraising Auction.

But we need you all to help and make these activities happen!