

Welcome:-

We thought you would like a change to the layout this month, so let us have your thoughts, maybe you would like to have a go at producing the newsletter, I am sure you will have some amazing ideas.

We have some interesting events coming up in May so have a look on page 4

I am writing this on the day after St Georges day the patron saint of England which is April 23rd also Shakespeare's birthday. The red rose being the country's emblem. Other nations in the UK emblems are The shamrock & St Patrick for Northern Ireland. The Thistle & St Andrew for Scotland and for Wales it is the Daffodil & St David. One stunning flower as a country's emblem is the sunflower this is an amazing flower that follows and keeps track of the sun as it moves across the sky what an achievement. The sunflower is the emblem of Ukraine, not only that but one of the country's main crops. Let us all hope that the Ukraine people will once again stand tall like their country's emblem rising up to reach the heavens.

You can read some quotations taken from Gay couples from Ukraine on page 2.

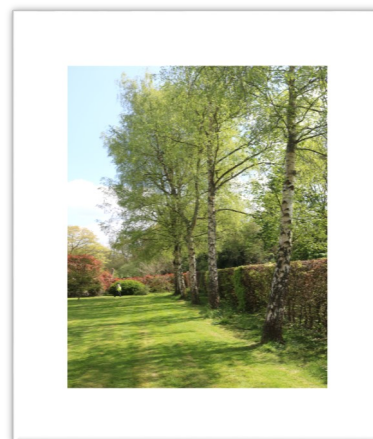
Over the past few weeks we have welcomed new members to our group which is wonderful so I would like to wish them happy days as members of GayWest. Page 3.

Colin.

On a beautiful Sunday afternoon a few members visited Algars Manor to visit their garden all part of the National Gardens Scheme charity events.

There was tea a cakes and plenty of chat. The event was well attended and soon became buzzing with all the excitement of a enjoying a spring day basked in sunshine highlighting the many splendid variety of plants throughout the garden.

A very enjoyable and rewarding afternoon



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Letters from our friends in Ukraine

From the beginning I was using my platform to unite people through my art" **Daniel**

" During the war, LGBTQIs are really for each other and are sticking together. That is beautiful" — **Tamara**

" I am still the same person as I was before the war.... Wanting to create, to be reborn" — **Daniel**

" Finding ways in which Kyiv Pride can help the community right now has helped me cope" — **Lenny**

" By having my cafe open, I'm doing my best to help my country stay alive" — **Oleg**

" A lot of the LGBTQI community are in the Ukrainian army. They wear a unicorn mark on their uniform" — **Evgeny**

Natalie, 18, is queer and non-binary. She fled from Derhachi, a small town close to Kharkiv. She has a disability and is currently staying in Lviv at the LGBT shelter set up there.

It is challenging to be part of the LGBTQI community in Ukraine. Especially if you 'look it' as well. If you like drag, it can be dangerous. You can never hug in a public place. In a city like Mariupol, you might get Beaten up. In Kyiv, it's a bit more relaxed. - - **Anton.**

I never went out as a couple with my previous boyfriend. But now that I am with Anton, we are more open about it. We don't kiss or hold hands in the street.

A lot of my friends turned their back on me— even friends I'd had for over five years. There is no equality yet for gays in in this country.
Alexander

Lviv is very closed-minded when it comes to the LGBTQI community. It's a very Catholic City.
After the war, the LGBTQI rights we have gained might be lost in the time. I feel that people will have other priorities.
Anton

" When you see women crying, children dying, I don't want to believe this is the truth" — **Oleg**

Rainbow Café :- News and Events

On Easter Saturday we had a special guest with us at the Café to help with our Easter Raffle, See photo. I am sure everyone there enjoyed the proceedings and I would like to thank those who donated some of the raffle prizes and all for taking part. The raffle raised £50.00p which was very good. Our next event at the Café will be:-



The return of the Gaywest Auction

Saturday 14th May, start time 11 15am

Now's the time to sort out those items you do not need anymore, dust them off and donate to GayWest's May Auction

We only have limited storage so come early on the day with your items please.

Inflation and the ever rising costs

Many of you will remember the 70's and how everything became more costly each week, and as the saying goes, been there, done that, have the T-shirt. and we are now there again. But I have some good news for you all, there will be no price increases at the Café any time soon and this is down to good management of GayWest funds, but most of all to you, the members for your support and donations over these past difficult years. The group has also maintained its membership levels and has benefitted by a gradual increase in new members joining us, see below, so thanks all, and welcome to the " Rainbow Cafes " 39th year !

Please welcome our newest members to the group.

**Nick & David
Gordon & Graham
Steve & Stephen
and Geoff.**

We hope they will enjoy being members of GayWest.



Like the boots!

Situations Vacant

We are in the process of writing up job descriptions for the different roles for your volunteering organisers and we will publish them in a future newsletter.

Remember that if it was not for the work these members who give up their own time voluntarily, there would be no GayWest.

GayWest Events — Dates for your Diary

Woodpecker Walks :-

The next walk will be on Sunday May the 8th at 11am as usual. This walk will follow a familiar pattern of country lanes and cross country paths. We will walk along an avenue of trees in full bloom and then cross through an enchanted woodland with its hidden lake and gentle flowing brook past ruins of what was once a working mill and then back to modern civilisation for well deserved refreshments.

A more gentle shorter walk is also planned for June on Sunday 12th starting at the same time, from the same place. A slower paced ramble as the weather could be hotter, or am I an optimist.

Social Evening :-

This months meeting is Wednesday 11th May at The Lodekka , from 8pm.

Tramway Rd, Brislington, Bristol BS4 3DS



The City of Wells Wednesday Market, May 18th.

Join us on a day out to Well's Market. An enjoyable place to visit, lots of stalls. Pubs and Cafes all nearby and you could also fit in a visit to the Bishops palace.

We will meet at The Market Café at 11am.

The café is situated looking over the actual market stalls in Market Place BA5 2RF



Music in the park

On Easter Sunday the other half and I had a very pleasant afternoon in keynsham park where the first live Brass band of the year was performing at the Bandstand, a free event. It was good music ,lovely sunshine a very pleasant couple of hours spent.

The concerts continue every Sunday during the summer months to find out more go to

www.keynsam-tc.gov.uk and on the home page scroll down to bands in the park for dates , times, and performers.