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Welcometo your March Newsletter. In a few weeks we will all spring forward to British summertime and be looking forward to those carefree days of summer and walks and outings and picnics.

But this month I want to talk about some books I have been reading, all from the GW book library and a link with some of the news from last month which celebrated 10 years since parliament passed the legislation for same sex marriage, (this year Jim and myself will be celebrating our 8th year of marriage) but my attention has been brought to how much Religion has caused so many problems for LGBT+ people over the years and still is today.

So back to the books, although novels as such, all are based around facts that did happen to the authors or people they knew. All have connections with religion in some way.

A Good start considering *Peter Ryde*. As a young boy Richard is the only survivor of a direct hit on his family home during the London blitz's and is taken in to a boys home just outside London were his battle with Child abuse and the demons and damnation from the church if ,as he starts to believe that he may be homosexual begin.

Flame by *Flame* a true story of growing up in Liverpool during the 50's in a religious family, He becomes a drag artist but had to fight those same demons as Richard and be cast out by his family all because the church said so.

Caught in the crossfire *Julian Roach* This is an American story and in quite modern times 2014 where a youth again from a very religious family and a cruel father sends him to Bible summer camps, where he meets the love of his life, who knows he is gay, and the battle to come out and accept that he is also. The author is the daughter of a pastor and her own son is gay. The story is based again on real facts.

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Enchanted Boy, *Richie McMullen*. This is a factual account of growing up in an abusive and religious family in Liverpool.

And to escape the abuse, he lands up working as a rent boy as the only way of earning money, and to get away. In 1985 the author set up a charity to support and help with the welfare of rent boys in the UK. Which is still going today.

So back to the 10 years celebration there are still many religions that still will not accept single sex marriage in their churches. The Methodist and M.C.C. Will, but the Church of England are still talking!. If two people love each other what difference does their sexuality matter, surely doesn't the church preach at us to love each other. The world in my opinion would be a better place without all these different religions, that if you study history have caused so much heartache over the centuries. Now what I think is better, a new planet has been discovered what the scientists call earth 2. It is 33 light years away but they believe it supports life! But that's for another day. **Colin**

Using your website

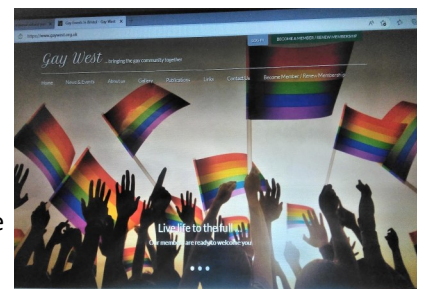
As a member of GayWest you have access to the groups website so just to update you on how to get the most from it read on.

If you have not added the site to your homepage or bookmarks or favourites when you first logged in with your membership number here is a reminder of what to do.

On your device search for www.gaywest.org.uk in your selected browser.

When the home page of the site appears on your screen (see photo) go to your bookmarks etc. icon and save to your device, now you always have the site.

On the sites homepage along the top of the page from left to right are the names of the pages you can activate these are **News & events**, **About us**, **Gallery**, **Publications**, **Links**, **Contact us** and **Become a member/renew Membership**.



So lets start by clicking on the first item **News & Events** this will open and ask you to login, Click or tap on the login icon this opens a box. In the top section you put in your membership number, below this you put in the password you were given when you joined gaywest . Tick the box at bottom left , this will save information to your device ,next click on the blue box on the right that says login.

Now the events page will open and you now have access to all other pages as well. Information here is also displayed as boxes on the home page. You will notice that the home page bar will still be at the top of the page so next click on the second icon on the list which is **About us** Up will come a page giving you a brief history of the group. The next icon is **Gallery** this will open up a photos gallery scroll down to view the photos. You can view the photos individually and as full screen photos by clicking on any photo. Use the left or right arrows to view next photo. You can also download a photo to your device and also print it out. If using a mouse, right click to obtain the menu list for this. Or touch screen for same action on mobiles and tablets.

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Gainsborough Films

Espied on YouTube during the Christmas festivities 2022 was a curious film offering, entitled Chu Chin Chow. It featured such luminaries as Fritz Kortner, George Robey, Anna May Wong and Pearl Argyle and it proved to be an astonishing and spectacular British Musical on the grandest of scales: In monochrome with huge sets, lavish costumes, dozens of songs, vast crowds, and all in an excellent digitised version!

It followed more or less the story of Ali Baba who with his forty thieves strove to steal from the rich to help the poor.

There is an element of human trafficking in the form of slave trading and there are a few gut-churning scenes along with thematic background, music especially composed by Frederic Norton and played by a symphonic orchestra.

This delicious romp runs for 1 hour 43 minutes, was made at the Gainsborough Studios, in London and was directed by Walter Forde. Even more surprising, was the year of production: 1934 sometime well before I was even born!

There are some memorable scenes incorporated into the screenplay –including the revolving capstan, the gruesome disposal of the forty thieves, and the uncanny appearance of a hand from someone buried alive! There is the grandest of finales – worthy of anything churned out from Hollywood in the same era. With the main characters assembled in the Calif's palace chamber, at least forty chorines suitably dressed in diaphanous-costumes appear and dance in the style of the seven veils.

Many more illustrious films followed later from the studios, but alas in 1951 the film company went into administration and the film complex was eventually demolished: nowadays a block of flats bearing the name Gainsborough stands on the site.

In my Quest for nostalgia, I have looked at relevant images on-line and hope one day I will be able to visit the once famous site and pay homage to the wonderful films that emerged from its hallowed walls.

Valentino 2023

We welcome our new members to GayWest

Claudia and Gavin

We now have 96 members from all parts of the Country, with about a third, attending our gatherings every Saturday at The Rainbow Café in Bath.

Biker with no lycra?



Grin and Bare it A Spanish high court has ruled in favour of allowing Alejandro Colmar to continue walking around his village naked, as he has been doing since 2020, in Aldaia, near Valencia in Spain.

For the COIN Collectors...

A new 1st edition fifty pence coin has been made that Honours our nation's secret war Heroes with the first-ever ALAN TURING fifty pence coin in association with BLETCHLEY Park, to get yours, go to www.turing50p.co.uk or call 08003168619



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The next icon is **Publications** , here you can access all magazines and newsletters since 2015 when the website was developed, again you can read them from the site or save to your device and print out.. Just scroll down the page and click on the publication you are interested in and this will then open up as a pdf file. Happy reading.

Links is our next icon, this is also available to non members. Here you will find a list of different organisations and their websites or Facebook pages. e.g. scroll down to where it says "Gays the word bookshop" click on green wording and this takes you to the website of the company where you can find the books you may want and buy from the online shop all accessed from your website and you can access the links without logging in to the site. The list includes other LGBT+ groups and walking clubs and much more.

Contact us is next and it does what it says, you can send us a message which goes to our email address and if it needs an answer, we will get back to you.

The final icon is **Become member/Renew your membership** This is also accessible by non members and is where many of our new members over the last few years have joined us. You can also renew your membership here and pay online. Also donations to the group can be done here.

Facebook and Twitter by strolling down on the home page the icons for Facebook and Twitter can be found bottom right of screen. Click on them and you can access the sites and add your own comments.

As a member, you pay for it so why not use it. Also don't forget the wonderful GayWest book library full of fantastic novels and much more all free to hire as a member.

Colin.

GayWest Events 2023

Woodpecker Walk returns on Sunday March 26th

Its time to put that spring in your step and venture out into the great outdoors for another trail blazing Woodpecker walk. Starting as before from 30 Woodpecker Close and returning back for refreshments.

The walk is only a few short miles along lanes and fields so no problems at all. Would advise good walking shoes.



Wells city Wednesday market

We are having a return trip to Wells market on 5th April.

Meet at 11 am at the Market place Café.

3 Market Place, Wells, BA52RF.

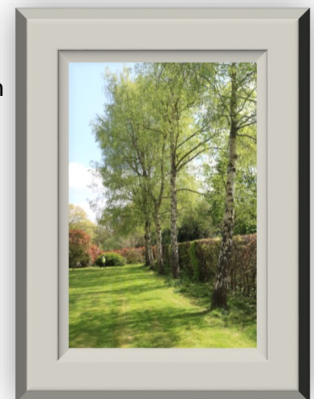
A visit to the Gardens of Algars Manor,

Sunday April 23rd. Part of the National Garden Scheme. Open from 1pm to 5pm admission £7.00p .

We will meet at entrance at 1pm. Station Rd, Iron Acton, BS37 9 TB

No access from via lane from Frampton cotterell

ignore Satnav.



GayWest Social evening Wednesday 8th March

Join us for our social evening at

“ **The Iodekka**” Tramway Rd, Brislington, Bristol, BS4 3DS

Meet from 8pm for a chat, a laugh and to put the world to rights.

The venue is part of the Hungry Horse chain and the food is good and reasonably priced.



Lenten-rose

Helleborus orientalis, commonly known as the Lenten-rose. It derived this common name from when the plant became available to buy in the UK in the 50's-60's, after an explosion of plant breeding. In the 50-60's the winters were much colder than they are today and these plants would come in to flower just before or during Lent.

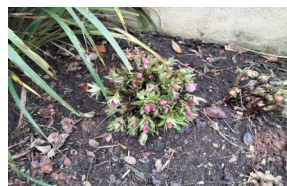
Helleborus orientalis comes from the region of Turkey and through to Greece. All Hellebores belong to the family Ranunculaceae – the buttercup family.

Helleborus orientalis is an evergreen herbaceous perennial. It produces large palmate shaped, dark green, leathery leaves up to approximately 18 inches high from the ground. They produce large saucer shaped flowers. The flowers are either white, yellow, green, pink and shades of light to very dark/blackish reds. The flowers are also single, double or anemone centered. These plants are non-fussy and will grow in any well drained soil in the full sun or shade.

The flowers occur from as early as January. Once the flowers are seen emerging from the ground the current leaves should be cut away to allow clusters flowers to emerge. They can grow up to 18 inches height. Shortly after the flowers start emerging the new leaves will start to come through. In some varieties the leaf can have a blackish tinge to them. Remove the flower stems in May, as they will go brown and unsightly within the plant.

Although there are many named varieties of Lenten Rose, I tend to find that they are bought for the color and type of flower....

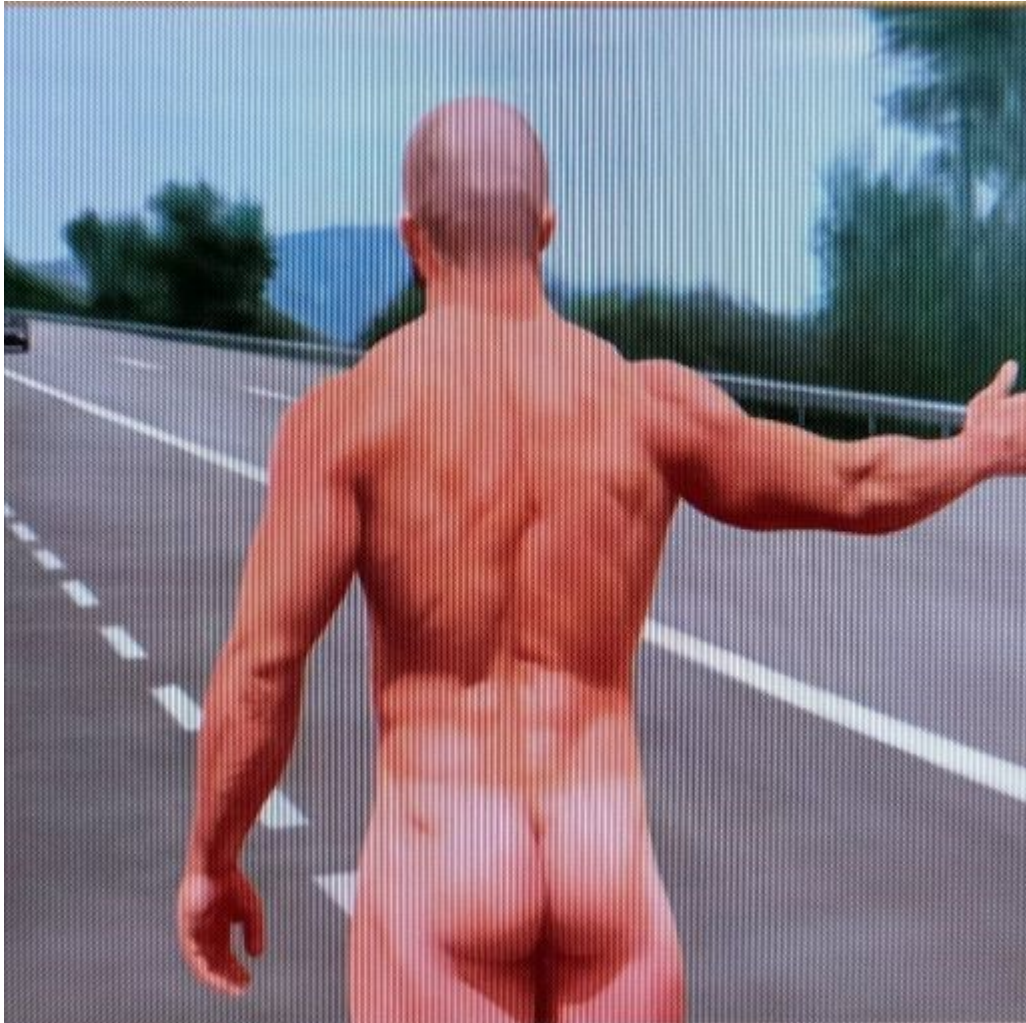
Here's some flowers ;-



From your GayWest Gardening Coach.... www.gardening-coach.co.uk or email to garden-coach2022@gmail.com

Paying your membership

Once upon a time, you could pay your membership by cash or cheque. Now you can also pay online via the website or bank transfer or use a standing order. To make life more easy for us old ones on the committee we would love it if you could set up a standing order from your bank. This would mean we no longer need to remind you when your fees are due which saves time and money. If you should wish not to be a member any more you can cancel the standing order and notify us, simple. A standing order can be a yearly payment or by monthly instalments. Give this some thought and get in touch. Thanks , *your Chairman*.



Would you give this fella a lift? Answers on a post card please.

GayWest needs your help!

We are urgently looking for copies of any past copies of our magazines. that you no longer wish to keep, in particular:-

- 1. The Early years 1970—1984**
- 2. any magazines from 1997 - 2013 incl.**

Any others would be appreciated. Contact Jim on Info@gaywest.org.uk