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Welcome to your November Newsletter in Autumn

Chairman's Blog

Our Annual General Meeting was well attended on 16 September. Thank you to all our members who voted to re-elect our existing committee and to elect me as your new Chairman.

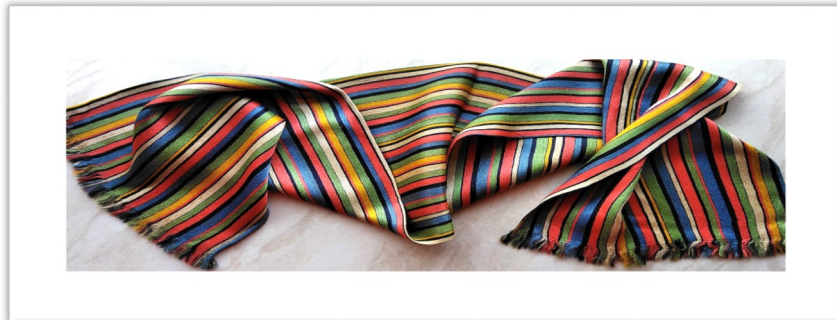
I thought I'd have to give a long, boring speech, at least 45-minutes, but James, acting as the facilitator, made sure the AGM proceedings went at a smart gallop, so I found myself muzzled - no long, dreary speeches.

Most of you know me, but for our newer members here is a quick recap. I've been at GayWest for thirteen years and on the Committee for nine of them. I've volunteered often at Pride events, helping Colin and Jim, and at the Cafe. So I know my way around GayWest. Thank you all for electing me as your new Chair. I've been reading up on the history of GayWest and I am mindful of the great honour of holding the post.

It's going to be business as usual and, as always, with a focus on running the Rainbow Cafe successfully. I've also taken on the role of editing the Newsletter. Nothing will change dramatically but good things will develop. I would like to know if you prefer the newsletter or the magazine format. The latter would imply more work, and some expense if you need a paper copy, but I do miss the nude photos of me on the front cover.

Collectively, all of us on the Committee will do our very best for you for the year ahead.

Michael Reid (Chairman)



Queer Spectrums

Can you remember those halcyon days when life was simple? We were either male or female, gay or straight. Then came the 1990's and Gender Studies, and suddenly that simple view was considered old-fashioned.

Today, the Queer Spectrum embraces not just the colours of the rainbow, but all its different hues and shades. No longer is it the acronym LGBT+, but LGBT-TQQIAAP+, and the spectrum is still growing. There is now a difference between sexual orientation and gender identity. Confused?

To keep you up to speed, here are just a few of the better known gender identities. We know what gay and lesbian is, but do you know what cisgender means? I'll be setting you homework, so concentrate.

Cisgender: a contentious word, but it's meant to be the opposite of transgender. If you were born male and identify as male, you are considered a now a cisgender man and visa-versa for females. Your cisgender can combine with any other orientation of choice.

Trans: an overall term to describe someone whose gender identity does not match easily with their birth sex.

Ace: A shortened version of asexual, someone who has little or no sexual desire. Also, they may describe themselves as demis, aromantic, non-romantic or grey-As.

Ally: a supporter of the LGBT+ Community, what we call a friend.

Bi: someone who is attracted to both men and women.

Intersex: denotes a person born with the attributes of both sexes and may identify as either male, female or non-binary.

Pan: these are people who consider themselves gender-blind and are attracted to anyone regardless of their sex and gender.

Queer: this can be a contentious word, the younger brigade use it but older LGBT+ people still see it as a derogatory term.

Questioning: used by people who are still exploring their sexuality or gender identity.

There are multiple labels and I want to add one more, I'm sure no-one will notice. I identify as Cucumber, as in 'gay as a cucumber', and my favourite colour is green.

Michael Reid

OLIVER!

Keen on musical shows, vintage theatres and great supporters of BLOGS (Bath Light Operatic Group) , we duly attended their latest production at the BATH THEATRE ROYAL. The theatre is widely known and loved because of its sheer beautiful vintage splendour not to mention its first class presentation of shows:

This year's choice by the group was LIONEL BART's OLIVER! based on Charles Dicken's Oliver Twist, and what a fabulous production it proved to be: all the infamous characters were there, from Oliver, the Artful Dodger, Fagin, Mr Bumble, and the murderous Bill Sikes (Sykes) with his wretched-looking but intelligent dog Bullseye.

Nancy (Sikes' girlfriend) was beautifully played by a talented actress and her demise (by Sikes) was both horrendous and horrific.

Hired in, the sets and costumes were perfect and scene changes of mood were clever and used modern technology to advantage. There were no less than fifteen songs, of which Food Glorious Food, Consider Yourself and As Long As He Needs Me were some of Bart's best compositions. The immortal line uttered by the hungry Oliver "Please Sir I want Some More" was a real show-stopper.

Adapted from Dicken's classic by Lionel Bart in 1960, it had its first trial run at the Wimbledon Theatre and was an immediate hit, transferring to the West End almost overnight.

Over the years it has been frequently revived for the stage by professional companies; and amateur groups have performed it to much acclaim.

In 1968 a film version directed by Carol Reed was made starring Ron Moody as Fagin and Shani Wallis as Nancy and the production went on to win six Academy Awards. Filmed at Shepperton studios, the excellent and realistic sets – based on Bath's Regency architecture - survived for a long time after production of filming was completed, and became a tourist attraction. As superb as the film was, I consider the stage versions better as they bring the characters and situations spontaneously to life.

VALENTINO

Sunday 26th November

Woodpecker Walk



**Sunday November 26th will be our next Woodpecker walk. We will meet at
30 Woodpecker Close , Keynsham, BS31 2FU at 11am.**

**A slightly longer walk this time , but again delving into some local history
and as always a circular walk .**

We arrive back at Woodpecker Close for refreshments

Contact :- Colin 07758810134

GayWest Social Evening

Wednesday November 8th

Join us for our social evening at “ **The Lodekka**”

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 Green King chain and
the food is good and reasonably priced.



Autumnal Jewels,



With the spring and early summer of 2023, our trees and shrubs experienced an amazing season of blossom. Our hedgerows, gardens, trees and shrubs literally flowered their socks off. I think it has been one of the most amazing periods of flowering I think I have witnessed. It is thought that this incredible flowering period was brought on by the incredibly hot summer of 2022. Maybe it was, maybe it wasn't – who knows!

Anyway, this autumn we are now being blessed with fruit and berries from this incredible flowering period. However not all have set fruit. I have noticed that there are not a lot of crab apples this year although the trees flowered exceptionally well. I suppose you can't have everything.



The berries of our native trees like Hawthorn and Holly and literally dripping with berries this autumn. A high number of our trees and shrubs in our gardens are also dripping with berries. Trees like mountain ash, strawberry tree, Cotoneaster, many of our shrubs like Berberis, Euonymus, Pyracantha, Rosa to mention just a few.



As the sun starts to wain and getting lower and lower in the sky and our days get shorter. The sun's rays hit these brightly coloured fruits and berries and they shine like autumnal jewels. These fruits and berries in turn attract our birds and insects to cash in on the feast now and well in to the autumn/ winter. Some berries like the glossy black berries of Privet and some holly berries are not palatable for our birds and are left for our enjoyment and reminders of better days.



www.gardening-coach.co.uk or email to gardencoach2022@gmail.com

May we take this opportunity to welcome all our new members and hope that they enjoy being a member of GayWest.

I Loved the Cruise - music & lyrics by Fred Barton

For those of us who love Musical Theatre, a great favourite is the American composer and lyricist Fred Barton.

With many theatre skills to his credit, he works on and off Broadway. He currently leads the Fred Barton Broadway Band, showcasing wonderful guest stars like Karen Murphy. He is particularly known for his gay-themed song revues, with their naughty lyrics dripping in double-meaning, one of which is 'I Loved the Cruise'.

There was a temptation to give you all the verses, but wretched copyright rules forbid. Instead, I want you to treat this as an interactive piece and go on either Facebook or YouTube to get the full benefit of what is described as a politically incorrect, gay, generation-gap song, where a married man looks back on his wilder days:

I loved the bars, where a manhunt meant being flirted by a man,

instead of scrolling through his pics - and previous tricks.

I loved the bars, where the customers had not one thing in common,

except the most important thing - we would sing!

What Fred Barton is alluding to here is that well-dressed men in suits would sit round the piano singing songs by Judy Garland and Carol Channing, amongst others. Their Nemesis, however, in the form of Rudy Giuliani, the politician and lawyer, allegedly thought this degenerate and wanted all the drinking/piano clubs closed down. Those were the good old days and we don't sing round the piano any more.

The lyrics end on a positive but bitter-sweet note. Perhaps the man will take the cruise in his older years, but will have to learn to sing 'I Loved the Cruise' in a new way.

For those of you who loathe the internet, take a deep breath, go to your Facebook page if you use one and search Fred Barton-songs. Or, go to the Google search bar (just as you do to visit our website), tap in *Fred Barton music/videos/Youtube*, and enjoy this song.

Remember to press the 'Like' button, I don't want to get sued for stealing copyright.

George Sinner

**GayWest Christmas Celebration is on Friday 15th December 2023
at the Royal Pavilion Café in Royal Victoria Park. For full details sent to members, check your recent emails ,or come along to the Rainbow Café.**

Or contact us on info@gaywest.org.uk