

QB

Nottinghamshire's Queer Bulletin

April/May 2007
Number 35

In this edition:

Things beginning with **B**

- ◆ Barbecued bulls
- ◆ Bears
- ◆ Bans
- ◆ Banna
- ◆ Bananas
- ◆ Britney
- ◆ BB(C)
- ◆ Bisexual beasts
- ◆ Babs and the Bean
- ◆ Biscuits at Broad Street

If you have any information, news, gossip or libel, please send it to

QB
Lesbian and Gay Switchboard
7 Mansfield Road
Nottingham NG1 3FB

or e-mail

notts@lgswitchboard.fsnet.co.uk

The deadline for the next edition will be mid May, 2007.

Switchboard is registered charity
number 1114273

GOODS AND SERVICES IT'S TIME TO ACT

FREE

In the 1970s, Switchboard's relationship with the Evening Post was like being attached to a yoyo. In 1975, they refused our ads, in 1976, they accepted our ads, in 1978, they refused our ads, in the 1980s they accepted our ads. Apart from a brief spat with the Nottingham Trader in 1988 (when they seemed to think that Section 28 applied to newspapers), we thought the era of bans on gay ads had long gone until 1998.

In 1998, Switchboard was in a most unusual position of having some spare cash and we thought we would advertise in Newark. The Newark Trader said "yes", but its sister paper, the Newark Advertiser said "no, we are a family newspaper".

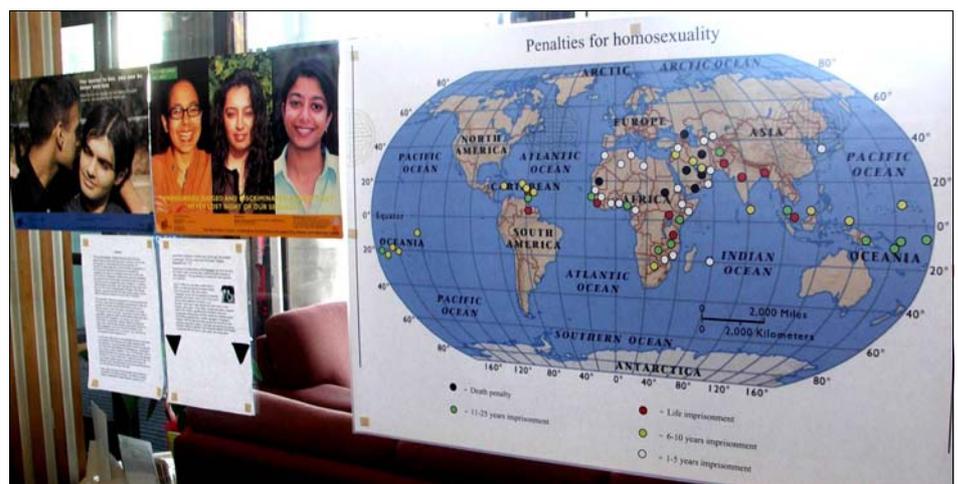
A few months ago, when the Notts Women's Walking Group approached the Newark Advertiser, they were astonished to learn that the 1998 policy was still in force.

Newark Advertiser

The amendments to the Goods and Services Act, which should prevent such discrimination, come into force in Northern Ireland in April. Will the law be fully extended to the rest of the UK? We, and the Notts Women's Walking Group and perhaps the Newark Advertiser, await the outcome with interest.

LGBT HISTORY MONTH IN NOTTINGHAM

The Switchboard/UNISON/Outburst/Nottingham Pride display at County Hall during the first week of February is shown below.



GAY MARRIAGE IS WRONG

Because

- 1) Being gay is not natural. Straight people always reject unnatural things like anaesthetics, polyester, jet flight and central heating.
- 2) Gay marriage will encourage people to be gay, in the same way that hanging around tall people makes you tall.
- 3) Straight marriage will be less meaningful if gay marriage were allowed; the sanctity of Britney Spears' 55-hour just-for-fun marriage would be destroyed.

A LETTER TO THE VICAR

Dear Vicar,

I am having problems abiding by some of the requirements set out in the Book of Leviticus. I hope that you can provide me with advice.

1. I know from Leviticus 11:6-8 that touching the skin of a dead pig makes me unclean, but may I still play football if I wear gloves?
2. My uncle has a farm. He violates Leviticus 19:19 by planting two different crops in the same field, as does his wife by wearing garments made of two different kinds of thread (cotton/polyester blend). He also tends to curse and blaspheme a lot. Is it really necessary that we go to all the trouble of getting the whole town together to stone them? (Leviticus 24:10-16) Couldn't we just burn them to death at a private family affair like we do with people who sleep with their in-laws? (Leviticus. 20:14)
3. When I burn a bull as a sacrifice on the altar on my patio, I know it creates a pleasing odour for the Lord (Leviticus 1:9). The problem is my neighbours. They claim the odour is not pleasing to them. Should I smite them?
4. A friend of mine has pointed out that eating shellfish is an Abomination (Lev 11:10), but Leviticus also says that homosexuality is an Abomination. Are these 2 sins equally abominable, or is there a scale of Abomination by which I can compare them, as I must admit I am partial to the occasional cockle?
5. Leviticus 21:20 states that I may not approach the altar of God if I have a defect in my sight. I have to admit that I wear reading glasses. Does my vision have to be absolutely 20/20, or is there some wiggle room here? Would it be acceptable to hide my affliction by wearing contact lenses?

I know you have studied these things extensively, so I am confident you can help. Thank you again for reminding us that God's word is eternal and unchanging.

Yours, Confused of Clifton

FANCY A GOOD STUFFING?

The **GAI Project** would like your help with assembling condom and lube packs.

Stuffing takes place on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month.

Time: 6.00 - 7.30 pm

Place: The Health Shop, Broad Street

Tea, coffee, high quality biscuits provided along with superb company. This could be the acme of your social calendar. Just turn up, or phone the GAI Project if you want more info see back page for contact details.

The GAI project is also looking for more paid session workers (day or evening work).
Phone or e-mail for details.

A FAREWELL

Margaret Richardson, of Nottingham PCT, has provided the following article about Martin Fox.

Martin started work at the Health Shop to set up the HIV Befriending Service in January 1997 on a fixed term contract and after successfully launching the scheme his post became substantive in January 2000. Over the past 10 years Martin has coordinated the service, providing support and training to the buddies and linking them appropriately to service users. However, this year Martin has decided to take early retirement and he will leave the service at the end of March 2007. He will be greatly missed by his colleagues at the Health Shop and all the people who have worked with him over the past 10 years. We wish him a long and happy retirement.

LGBT HISTORY MONTH ... MORE

The picture shows Switchboard's display at Central Library during the 2nd half of February.



WHAT DO WOMEN REALLY WANT?

Well, in Nottingham that seems to be somewhere to drink, dance, talk and have a good laugh that's not only women-friendly but women-only.

When Pam Burrows was approached to take over a new monthly women's night in the city, a quick chat about it with her girlfriend, Al, quickly exploded into their new company **Purple^o**.

Now providing what women really want has expanded beyond the monthly disco '**PINK!**' to include a spectacular New Year's Eve Party and a massive women-only summer extravaganza at Nottingham's biggest, luxurious nightclub, **Oceana** on 24th June 2007. Spanning the afternoon from 3pm right up until 1am that night, this lezfest has some fab DJ's, stalls with naughty and nice things to buy, competitions, lounges, great food and headlining the varied bill is no less than Claire Summerskill (known as the lesbian Victoria Wood).

Taking to women about what they want, the **Purple^o** girlz have found a widespread feeling of discontent about women's events. "Someone might put on a one-off or do something regular for a short time; the problem is having something consistent that's worth going to. Women used to just be glad there was something to go to, no matter what it was like but now they're fed up of tatty pub basements or mixed clubs which seem to be all about what the boys want, now women want some good quality experiences and venues with a bit of class".

In the future, Pam and Al intend to expand **Purple^o** further into a wide variety of other gatherings to meet the needs of a very diverse group, as Pam puts it "Some women want a raving good nightclub experience, some women want to sing round a camp fire-and some of us want to do both! It's about having choices and all the choices being good ones, not 'oh, I'll go to that 'cos that's all there is'."

Having been known for quite a while as Party Pam (for various and some undisclosed reasons) this half of the company is well versed in arranging events. Having been involved in putting on Nottingham Pride for the last 4 years, and Chair for the last 2, Pam knows what it takes to take an empty venue and fill it with fabulous entertainment and delighted punters.

"The great thing is now that we're concentrating purely on what women want, and we seem to be getting it right so far, women are having a great time...what could be better than that?!"

PURPLE'S PRINCIPLES

True to the idea of doing something new and different, Purple even has principles to work by. At **Purple^o** we are passionate about the freedom, empowerment and enjoyment of women.

In hosting our women-only events we follow these main principles;

To always

- ◆ Use venues accessible for disabled women
- ◆ Use sign language interpreters whenever the event requires them
- ◆ To encourage and enable the inclusion of black and ethnic minority women
- ◆ To empower and motivate all women
- ◆ To always donate a percentage of proceeds from each event to charities for women and children
- ◆ For all indoor events to be non-smoking
- ◆ To enable as many women as possible to have fun
- ◆ Have lots of fun ourselves (or else what's the point?!)

To wherever possible

- ◆ Book lesbian acts and performers for our events
- ◆ Use earth-friendly products for decoration and equipment (for example bio-degradable balloons!)
- ◆ Use women traders and service providers
- ◆ Use local, small companies
- ◆ Hire all-women staff crews for events

UPCOMING EVENTS BY PURPLE

- ◆ **PINK** Monthly Women's Disco at Meadow Club, Meadow Lane, Nottingham First Friday of every month. £5 admission.
- ◆ **Midsummer Night's Dream** @ Oceana. Sunday 24th June 2007. 3pm til 1am. £12 tickets in advance (£15 on the day). From tickets@purple.uk.com.

Watch this space for info about the spectacular **Women's New Year's Eve Party**.

Better still get on the mailing list and get the very latest info as it's released by emailing

enquiries@purple.uk.com

GAY POET CREATED ROBIN HOOD

Tony Bilton writes Even if Robin Hood wasn't gay, the man who wrote the famous ballads was. And this writer, poet Sir John Clanvowe, was also "married" to Sir William Neville, Constable of Nottingham Castle from 1381.

The first mention of Robin Hood as a subject of ballads is in 1377, but these ballads are not recorded - no Merry Men, no Nottingham. The earliest surviving ballads date between 1380 and 1400. Sir John was ideally placed to write these later ballads, which a century after his death were printed as "The Geste of Robyn Hode" - the source of all the legends we know today.

Sir John and Sir William met before 1370 and were renowned as a close, loyal couple. Almost certainly they recognised their relationship in a church ceremony. Their tombstone even shows their coats of arms as a married couple - ignoring William's real wife! As an aristocrat's youngest son, William married an heiress (Elizabeth le Waleys) to provide an income.

John and William were friends of King Richard II, who came to Nottingham many times. He was also a patron of art and literature. Perhaps, on one of his visits, bored with the old Robin Hood stories, Richard asked John to come up with some new ones.

Just like modern writers, medieval poets used real people on which to base characters, and John flattered his partner by using elements from William's and Elizabeth's family history to create new stories of Robin Hood. These coded elements would be recognised by the audience, and enjoyed as in-jokes.

In "The Geste", Robin Hood lives in Barnsdale, Yorkshire, where the le Waleys family owned many manors. The king in "The Geste" is Edward, not Richard the Lionheart. Edward II came to Nottingham many times, and in 1324 came to deal with outlaws. He made his lover Piers Gaveston Constable of the castle (William's uncle married Gaveston's widow). The sheriff in 1324 was Henry Fauconberg (William's aunt married into this family), and legend says that the Sheriff was Little John's brother.

The Merry Men live in a typical all-male community much favoured by Richard II. Even any homoerotic readings may be Sir John's coded sexual fantasies. "The Geste" is also anti-church, which fits with John's support for the religious reformer John Wycliff.

Using these elements and more, John could have woven new characters and plots into older stories and in the process create the basis of the legends we know today.

Like the city council (who recently, hypocritically, tried to brand Robin Hood as a "bad influence"), Sir John, though his partner's connections, tried to bring the outlaw hero closer to home.

Fuze@Oceana

The newest and sexiest
gay night in the calendar

'Get In' at the launch

Wed May 9th 2007

And then Every 1st Wed,

10pm til 3am

A Midweek Mini Weekend!

May 9th

June 6th

July 4th

£5 entry

Oceana, Lower Parliament St, Nottingham

Find out more - info@fuze-events.co.uk

NOTES AND QUEERIES

- ◆ A first-ever museum display, "Against Nature?", which opened in January at the University of Oslo's Natural History Museum in Norway, presents 51 species of animals exhibiting homosexuality. Homosexuality has been noted in over 1500 species, says the exhibition coordinator. E.g. giraffes show more same-sex than heterosexual activity and most dolphins are bisexual - he's not called "Flipper" for nothing.
- ◆ A BBC radio programme promoting safer sex mentioned getting free condoms, which would be given away on "a first come, first served principle."
- ◆ Swiss operatic tenor Hugues Cuenod was singing well into his eighties. He made his debut at the New York Met aged 85. Now 104, he is looking forward to his civil partnership ceremony now that Switzerland has passed laws recognising same-sex relationships.
- ◆ According to "The Observer", claims for discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation cost UK businesses £4 million in 2006.

AN OFFER TOO GOOD TO MISS?

Are you a lesbian looking for affordable, safe housing?



Banna can help

The flats are...

- ◆ one bedroom self-contained flats to rent in Victorian property near Nottingham City Centre.
- ◆ Close to Nottingham City transport routes and have on street parking.
- ◆ part of Banna Lesbian Housing Co-operative.
- ◆ have access to shared garden.
- ◆ have access to shared laundry facilities.

Black women are currently under represented in the co-operative and are encouraged to apply. All tenants of the other flats are lesbians. The flats are above ground level and unfortunately not wheelchair accessible.

If you would like more information or an application form, please contact: **07770895697**

SPARKLE BRIGHTER WITH PRIDE

Plans are moving apace for this year's "**Sparkle With Pride**" celebration on 28th July.

Nottingham newcomers at **Niche** are planning to host a "Bear in the Woods" event as part of their "Bear weekend", with "Bears" from across the country joining in the Arboretum.

The **Broadway Cinema** is hosting a film evening with a proportion of the takings going to Pride. They will be showing "Prick Up Your Ears", the 1987 film about the life of playwright Joe Orton on Thursday 10 May. Leicester-born Orton was murdered 20 years ago by his lover, and Leicester in hosting many Orton-related events. "Prick Up Your Ears" stars Gary Oldman as Orton, with Alfred Molina and Julie Walters. There will be two screenings of the film, and more details will be given in Broadway's May brochure. Other events and a singalong are planned for later in the year.

For more information about Pride, events, and how to get involved, check out the website

- ◆ www.nottinghampride.co.uk

TOTALLY BANANAS

The President of Gambia has horrified scientists by announcing that he has developed a "miracle cure" for HIV/AIDS.

Hundreds of Gambians have lined up to be "cured" by President Yahya Jammeh, who treats his patients by rubbing a mysterious herbal paste into their ribcages and then instructing them to swallow a bitter yellow drink, followed by two bananas. Mr Jammeh says "AIDS sufferers will be cured within 3 to 30 days."

GROUP OF THE DAY

Nottingham LGCM has been part of the local LGB community for nearly 27 years. We are a friendly social group and give newcomers a warm welcome. Currently we have round 30 members. Many live in Nottinghamshire, but we reach out into neighbouring counties such as Lincoln, Leicester and Derby.

We have one main meeting a month – generally in a church hall or a member's home. A typical programme includes talks and discussions (e.g. recently on Civil Partnerships). We have days out to places of interest, and we visit the theatre and cinema. Meals out and barbecues are always popular with our members. We have a reputation for eating! One feature of our programme is Sunday Teas. We gather at a member's home to enjoy a cup of tea and a bun and generally enjoy each other's company.

We can be serious when we need to be. We try to offer support to members in their dark times. When needed, we can provide a listening ear or a shoulder to cry on. Our programme includes devotional evenings and worship. But we do things in a relaxed, easy-going style and we love to have a good laugh.

We are recognised by the national Lesbian & Gay Christian Movement and "Christian" is part of our title. But you don't have to be a Christian or a church-goer to come along and join in our activities, as long as you are sympathetic to Christian ideals.

If this sounds interesting, why not come along to one of our regular meetings on the second Friday of each month. You might find you like us! To find out more, phone Mark on (0115) 854 5944, or E-mail David on david.miller14@ntlworld.com

BRIEFS ON AND OFF THE SCENE

The first **PINK** night (women only disco) on March 3rd was a great hit and will now continue monthly on the first Friday (that's April 6th, May 4th) at The Meadow Club, Notts County Football Ground, Meadow Lane. 8.00 'til 1.00 am.

Nottingham City Council will soon be monitoring sexual orientation amongst new applicants for jobs within the authority. Giving details of one's sexual orientation will be voluntary, as it will be for disability, ethnicity etc. The details will be made anonymous and will be separate from the actual application. The move will go some way towards giving a more realistic view of the proportion of LGBT people working for the Council.

Niche recently ran a **Bears Night**. We hear that it was roaring (growling?) success. We will let you know if we get details of further events.

Lesbian & Gay Switchboard

0115 934 8485 or 01623 621515

Monday-Friday
7-10pm

7 Mansfield Road, Nottingham, NG1 3FB.

notts@lgswitchboard.fsnet.co.uk

www.nottslgs.org.uk

www.nlgshistory.ik.com

The GAI Project

0115 947 6868

Monday-Friday
daytimes

c/o The Health Shop. Broad Street,
Nottingham NG1 3AL.

gaiproject@nottinghamcity-pct.nhs.uk

Police Homophobic Crime
Helpline

0800 085 8522

SOME LOCAL LISTINGS

Breakout

Social group for gay & bisexual men.
Tuesdays 7.30 pm (at the Health Shop)
Contact Switchboard or GAI Project or go to
www.breakoutnottm.org.uk

Older Gay Men's Group

Support and social group for men aged 50+.
Meets 3rd Sunday of month,
4 pm at the Health Shop.
Contact GAI Project.

Outburst!

Group for LGBT young people up to the age of 25.
Meets every Monday at Base 51. Phone or text
07940 761160 (Davina) for details.

Details of the following groups can be obtained from Switchboard:

Nottingham Hyking Dykes; Notts Lesbian Book Club; Trans-Action (TV/TS); Women's Badminton; Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement; East Mercia MSC; the Chameleon Group; University of Nottingham & Trent University LGBT Societies; Peak Ruffties Women's Walking Group; Refugee Forum Gay Men's Group; Something Social; Notts Police OUTNetwork; Flying Colours; Nottingham Bi Women's Group; LiNk-Notts; LIFT; Lesbians in Ashfield Friendship & Support; North Notts Gay Women's Walking Group; Ball Bois gay football team, LGB Youth Groups in Worksop & Mansfield; Tagadere: Weekenders; Newark Gay Men's Social Group; East Midlands Gay Outdoor Club and, of course, S.H.A.G.G.E.R.S.

DIARY

REAL ALE SOCIAL

Something Social has expanded (again!) For those who enjoy real ales, there is now a meeting every second Sunday of the month between 3 pm and 5 pm. It's at the VAT and Fiddle, 12-14 Queens Bridge Rd Nottingham, NG2 1NB.

You can see more on the Something Social website, which is www.somethingsocial.co.uk

EASTER EGGSTRAVAGANZA

Poptastic comes to Derby on Friday April 6th. It's at The Nightclub, 10 pm 'til 4 am. For details see www.timenightclubderby.co.uk

GAY CONFERENCE

Gay Sensibilities 2007. Described as a "pick'n'mix" event, it takes place at Nottingham's Catholic Cathedral and includes sessions on:

- ◆ Eroticism and the Tibetan nose flute
- ◆ The Semiotics of Gaydar
- ◆ Restore your libido with a trampoline
- ◆ Iran, the new Ibiza.

Note the date for your diary ... it's April 1st.

WE ARE SO PLEASED

Will Miss Babs' shop be taken over by "The Guilty Bean" (the world's second biggest chain of coffee shops - "We're second so we grind harder"). Will Mrs Overall set fire to her macaroons? Find out when the musical version of Victoria Wood's shaky-scenery soap "**Acorn Antiques**" reaches the Theatre Royal - 30th April/5th May.

PARACHUTE JUMPING

No, we are not making this up. **Outdoorlads** is an outdoor pursuits group for Gay/Bi Lads. They do walking, climbing, caving and (all in the best possible taste) watersports.

Here's plenty of advance warning of a parachute jump and training camping weekend organised in Nottinghamshire by Outdoor Lads for the weekend beginning July 7th.

The last date for registering for this is May 25th and you can do that by going to their website www.outdoorlads.com

