

QB

Nottinghamshire's Queer Bulletin

February/March 2009
Number 46

In this edition:

- Queen of the Midlands
- Queen in the Midlands
- King's toy boy
- Eternal Damnation
- The last straw
- Other things

We must apologise to those of our readers who were unable to use their copy of QB to claim their 15% discount on Waitrose's organic quince preserves. Waitrose have informed us that their entire stock was sold in the first 20 minutes after opening.

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 early January 2008

**Switchboard is registered
charity number 1114273**

This edition of QB is sponsored by generous donations from Break-out Gay Men's group and Eat Out Social.

LGBT HISTORY MONTH IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

FREE

February is



LGBT History Month

In 2005 LGBT History Month was a novelty which drew predictably snide comments from the Daily Mail. These days several local organisations have settled into a routine of putting on something each February, e.g. Nottinghamshire Police have an annual display at Sherwood Lodge Police HQ. The picture above is part of the front page of a 4-page leaflet (for which we can thank the County Council) printed to publicise some of the things going in Nottinghamshire.

Inside QB you will find a list of various displays we know of at the time of printing. Use the calendar on the LGBT History Month website (see back page) to find out about last minute additions and about what's going on around the country.

Two events for your diary are:

1. The **4th Annual LGBT History Pub Quiz**. It's on Tuesday February 10th in the Green Room of the Lord Roberts. It's £1 to get in, but that includes a free buffet and prizes for (at least) the first 10 best sets of answers. Starts fairly promptly at 8.00 pm
2. Nottinghamshire's Rainbow Heritage's 2009 **LGBT History Exhibition** at the View from the Top Gallery (4th floor above Waterstones on Bridlesmith Gate). This kicks off with a launch night 7-9 pm on Tuesday February 17th. Entrance is free and so is the food and drink. The exhibition then continues from Wednesday February 18th to Sunday February 22nd and is open during Waterstones normal opening hours. Make sure you try to answer the quiz which goes with the exhibition; you can get all the answers off the displays and there's a £20 prize for the first set of correct answers drawn out of the box.

LGBT HISTORY MONTH IN NOTTS

Here's a list of displays that you can see around the County:

Nottingham Register Office, Shakespeare Street, Nottingham.

Feb. 4th to Feb 25th Civil Partnerships

Mansfield Museum,
Feb 4th to Feb 25th Nottingham Pride Festivals

Mansfield Civic Centre
Feb 4th to Feb 25th Pink Professions

Nottingham Council House:
Feb 23rd to Feb 27th . Gay News 1972-83;
Pride festivals

Broxtowe Civic Centre
Feb 9th to Feb 13th Pink Professions

Newark Civic Centre
Feb 2nd to Feb 13th Pink Professions

Gedling Civic Centre
Feb 9th to Feb 13th Civil Partnerships

Rushcliffe Civic Centre
Feb. 4th to Feb.25th Nottingham Pride Festivals

Racial Equality Council
Dates to be arranged LGBT & BME, Homophobia
Civil Partnerships

Central Library, Angel Row, Nottingham.
Feb. 2nd to Feb. 13th: Gay Nottingham Times;
Punishment; Civil Partner
ships; The Police and Us

Newark Library
Feb.4th to Feb. 25th. Civil Partnerships; Pink
Professions; LGBT & BME

Beeston Library
Feb. 4th to Feb 25th. Civil Partnerships; Pink
Professions; LGBT & BME

Arnold Library
Feb. 4th to Feb 26th The Police and Us:
Nottingham Pride Festivals

Sneinton Library
Feb. 4th to Feb. 25th LGBT and BME

St. Anns Library
Feb. 4th to Feb 25th LGBT and BME

Radcliffe on Trent Library
Feb. 4th to Feb 25th Civil Partnerships

West Bridgford Library
Feb. 3rd to Feb. 26th Birds and Bees,
Notes and Queeries

QB'S BITS

- **Nottinghamshire Police** have organised the printing of some anti-homophobia posters. They will be seen on some of Nottingham's Trams during February.
- **ShOUT** is an e-mail list through which you can get updates about what's happening gaywise in Nottingham. To add yourself to their list, e-mail shoutnottingham@yahoo.co.uk
- If you are contemplating having a Civil Ceremony, you might be interested in a course which **South Notts College** is providing this term. It's about planning a civil ceremony (or a marriage, whatever that might be). It's a free course and will occupy 10 three-hour sessions. If you are interested, phone 914 6194 ... or perhaps your attitude will be that of a friend who says he sorted his ceremony out in 20 minutes on the back of a cigarette packet. While you are in the mood, the College is also doing a "make your own handbag" course.

THE OTHER LEAFLET

At the November City Council LGBT Consultation group meeting, the City Council was praised for producing an excellent 16 page booklet for Black History Month. As Stephen Parker, from the City Council department which produces the Nottingham Arrow and other publications was present, we took the opportunity of asking if there was any intention of producing an equivalent, though smaller (let us say 4-page) leaflet for LGBT History Month.

The first response was that BME people constituted 23% of Nottingham's population. It was pointed out that the Black History Month booklet was not aimed at all Nottingham's BME population, but at the Afro Caribbean community, which may well (using government figures) make up a smaller % of Nottingham than the LGBT community. The Council's website is already asking for suggestions for next year's Black History Month booklet.

It was hard to get a response as to whether the City Council would assist with an LGBT equivalent. Lack of clear publicity for Nottingham Pride in the last 2 years make us less than optimistic. We did, however, learn that Mr Parker's department was "tolerant" and that they had a gay man working for them. We hope his department also tolerates disabled people.

NOMINATIONS, PLEASE

On February 17th at the NRH exhibition, 3 people or organisations will be presented with plaques recognising their contribution to the local LGBT Community. Thinking well ahead, we are now asking for nominations for 2010 - e-mail us with your ideas.

THE JUSTIN CAMPAIGN



Jason Hall has started "The Justin Campaign". "Justin" is **Justin Fashanu**, the former Nottingham Forest player who was the only first rank football player ever to come out. The campaign is both in memory of Justin and an attempt to tackle the homophobia still prevalent in football and which Justin received, particularly from Nottingham's "hero" Brian Clough.

The aim of **The Justin Campaign** is to get the football authorities to observe Saturday 2nd May 2009 as Justin Fashanu Day. The long-term aim is to get 2nd May as the annual international day of protest against homophobia in sport. You can find more about the campaign at

www.thejustincampaign.com and there will be a section devoted to the campaign at the Nottinghamshire's Rainbow Heritage exhibition.

NOTTS OUT

Notts Out was a conference held on November 17th. It was organised by Nottinghamshire County Council to look at homophobia and homophobic bullying of young people.



Sue Sanders (above) gave a typically forceful and cogent introduction to the day, which included several workshops on related themes.

Though there were a fair number of people from various youth services, it was disappointing that teachers were notable mainly by their absence.

QB GETS GRUMPY

More and more organisations are realising that they will need do something about their responses to sexual orientation as one of the "diversity strands", rather than simply list it (or in some cases not list it) in an equal opportunities statement. Faced with Equality Impact Assessments those organisations have realised, in some cases with panic, that they have got to be seen to go through a consultation process.

The City Council started a Consultation Group in 2003 and the Police's Consultation group goes back to 1998. For others it's a new experience. Locally we now have about 7 statutory organisations trying to consult us .. It's worth mentioning that the Primary Care Trusts are, as far as we are aware, not amongst them. Sometimes they are asking the same questions to the same people. Could they not talk to each other? Could they not consult each other from time to time?

Their processes of consultation usually assume that the groups they consult have paid workers who can get along to their daytime meetings. Though there are about 40 local LGBT social/support groups, only 2 have paid workers. Nearly all such groups are run by volunteers with 9-5 jobs, so the "let's organise a daytime consultation meeting" usually excludes most groups.

Some of the consultation is utterly tokenistic. A couple of months ago Switchboard received an e-mail from a national organisation which believes itself to be central to the issue of diversity. They wanted to set up a consultation meeting. They wanted Switchboard to contact local groups which might be interested in this process and, having obtained an agreement from them to get involved, communicate their contact details to this national organisation.

The e-mail from this organisation arrived on Monday morning; the organisation wanted their reply by lunchtime that day. Many of the groups can only be contacted by e-mail. So that's 40 groups to be contacted in 3 hours ... and of course all of those groups will have their organisers sitting ready by the phone or computer waiting to discuss their potential involvement in the consultation process? As Switchboard's volunteers only work during the evening, the whole exercise was made even more unrealistic.

Over and over we keep telling these people "we will give you the contact details, but if you are serious about consultation then YOU, with your paid workers, must follow things through." The probable outcome is that somewhere there is a piece of paper filed away saying "we contacted them, but there was no positive response." Box ticked.

La Chic in the News

So, we shall soon see the opening of the first club for homosexuals in the country. Nottingham is well named "**The Queen of the Midlands**".

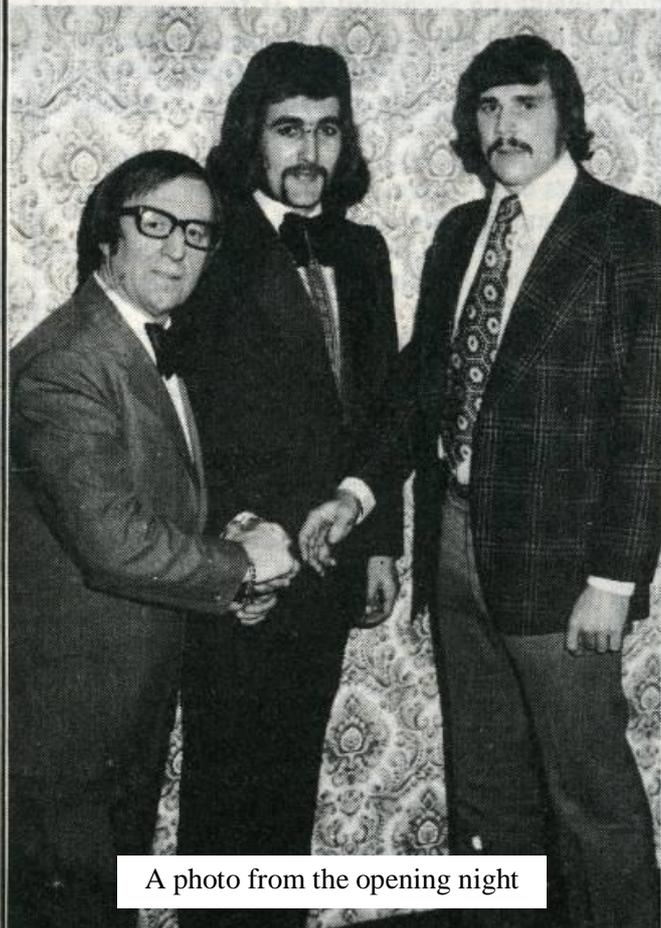
S. Cronk, Abbey Road, Bingham

"I realise that this "gay, unhappy breed" are in need of help, but why choose our city?"

The comments on this page were all prompted by the opening in 1973 of La Chic night club on Canal Street. La Chic was the first club in the UK which had a licence specifically for lesbians and gay men. The letters are all taken from various local newspapers.



New Club For Notts



A photo from the opening night

Whenever the subject of homosexuality arises, it is always accompanied by the cry "Think of the effect it will have on young people".

Any consultation of crime statistics will verify that your son is far less likely to be molested by gay men than is your daughter by heterosexuals.

What effect will the opening of this club have on young people in Nottingham? If they are heterosexual, they will ignore it - if they are homosexual, they will go along and enjoy it. Veritas, Clifton

So Nottingham, famous for its association with William Booth, that man of God, is to achieve infamous notoriety by allowing the opening of a club for homosexuals. The first of its kind in the country!

God rained fire and brimstone upon Sodom because of its people's manifest pleasures in such malpractice. Abuses of themselves with mankind (men) are prominent in the list of those who shall not inherit the kingdom of heaven, but who are in danger of eternal damnation. Frank Hill, West Bridgford.

There are, it is true, a small number of people born with an imbalance of genes, but the vast majority of prospective members for the new club do not belong to this small minority. These people are sexual deviants and perverts who behave in this way, calling themselves bisexuals.

No one seems to have considered the corrupting influence these clubs will have on young teenagers who will visit this club and become involved with these evil people who, having lost their self respect, are anxious to involve as many other as possible. Concerned Parent, Wollaton

I was amazed and disgusted to hear that £40,000 is to be spent on a club for "gay people". What on earth is happening to the world? Surely woman was made for man? The idea of men kissing and dancing together makes me sick - the same with women. In my opinion, such people ought to be put on a desert island, given picks and shovels and made to cultivate it.

I had 40 years of marriage to a good man. When he died the bottom of my world dropped out. Surely all things natural are right? To some people I may seem intolerant. Thank God I am. Rachel Creasey, Stanesby Rise, Clifton.

Haven't we got enough gay people, as they call themselves, without bringing them from places like London, Birmingham, Manchester and other places? This is the last straw to a dying city and to a very unhappy citizen. Mrs M Ford. Bramcote Lane, Beeston

Gay Nottingham Times

No. 7 Claiming our history, Celebrating our present, Creating our future

When it comes to pre-20th century LGBT history, the ordinary members of the community only tend to appear as victims or criminals. It is generally the rich and well-connected who were able to live their lives to the full. Nottinghamshire has produced some colourful aristocrats.

George, Lord Byron (1788-1824)



Called "mad, bad, and dangerous to know", Byron inherited his title and Newstead Abbey at the age of 10. His poetry made him popular with the rich, and his polysexual antics made him popular with the masses. From choirboys to countesses, politician's wives to Greek youths, his antics led to Westminster Abbey refusing to bury him, so the biggest crowd in Nottingham history followed his coffin from the city centre for burial at Hucknall.

George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham (1592-1628)



"Favourite" (i.e. toy-boy) of King James I, Buckingham was born in Leicestershire. As one of the highest officers of state, Buckingham accompanied the court on the king's frequent journeys into Nottinghamshire. In 1620, James arranged for Buckingham to marry Nottingham Castle heiress, Lady Catherine Manners.

Pink 'n' Posh



George Seymour (1923-1994)



Lord of Thrumpton Hall, descendant of Charles II, and snobbish, George married and had children. But later in life he lived at Thrumpton with a string of young men, one of whom shot himself. George died of grief shortly afterwards.

Lord Arthur Pelham-Clinton (1840-1870)



Arthur was son of the Duke of Newcastle of Clumber Park. After deserting from a distinguished naval career he became MP for Newark. His partner, Ernest Boulton, was a famous cross-dresser calling himself Lady Stella Clinton. A famous trial was brought against Boulton, Clinton and others, but Arthur died (probably suicide) before the trial.

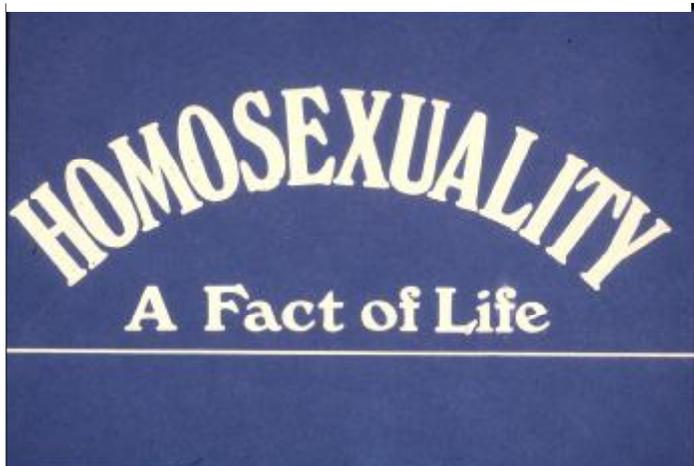
Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (1689-1762)



Mary was daughter of the Duke of Kingston of Thoresby Hall. She had a relationship with Anne Wortley, who died young. Mary then married Anne's brother, an ambassador to Turkey, and wrote about her travels. In Turkey, Mary saw a form of inoculation, which she modified and introduced into the UK in 1719.

A CONTROVERSY FROM 1978

Even today the juxtaposition of the words "homosexuality" and "school" is likely to produce and eruption from the Daily Mail. In 1978 the Campaign for Homosexual Equality (CHE) produced a tape/slide kit which attempted to put across the truth about homosexuality. The kit was intended for use in schools.



In Nottingham there was huge opposition to a proposal to show the tape/slide kit at Nottingham Teachers' Centre, but eventually it was shown - the world did not end ... but the kit still wasn't used in Nottingham's schools.

If you want to see the tape/slide kit, it's on the Nottinghamshire's Rainbow Heritage Website - you need to find the section on CHE - go the 1967 to 1980s Timeline. There is no sound, but the essence of the text has been added to the pictures.

While you are at it, there are four other slide sequences:

- One shows 70 pictures from Stockholm/Europride.
- The second shows 60 pictures from various Prides and Pink Lace events since 1997.
- The third shows pictures from La Chic club (1973-7) and Part Two (1981-5)
- The fourth shows pictures from some civil partnership ceremonies

AN ANTIDOTE

Possibly this antidote is to be used against that rancid Nazi-in-a-skirt from the Vatican. It arrived in the form of an e-mail from the Rev. Chris Goacher, the minister of Nottingham Unitarians in the Lace Market.

He sent a copy of their latest newsletter in the hope that it would "help counter the negative press that always seems to be about regarding churches and the LGBT community." He says "We are a wholly welcoming community and have a proud and long record of support for the LGBT community and their rights."

THE BEST CLUB EVER

Page 4 shows the reaction to the opening of La Chic in 1973, but what was (in your opinion) the best gay club in this area? You can now pick your favourite by voting on the "Vote here" (what a surprise) section on the Nottinghamshire's Rainbow Heritage website.

The choice is between

The Pavilion Club	Mario's/Shades/Whispers	
La Chic	The Sandpiper	Part Two
Club 69/L'Amour/Nero's		De Luxe
Casablanca/Kitsch		NG1

Go to www.nottsrainbowheritage.org.uk

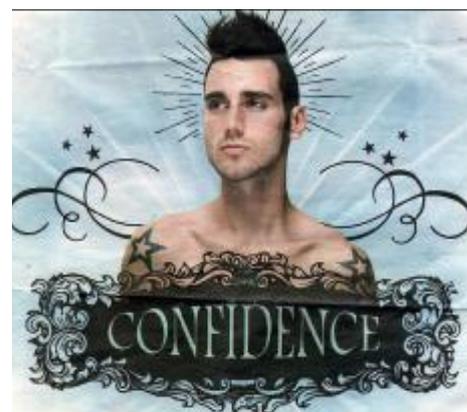
POST ITS (PART 3)

At this year's Pride, people were asked to post their views about various topics. One of them was "what was the most important event in helping LGBT rights". Some of the comments were:

- Civil partnerships
- The 1967 Sexual Offences Act
- Repeal of Section 28
- The education of the general public
- Well-known people "coming out"
- Equalising the age of consent
- The changing of public views and attitudes
- The Montagu and Wildeblood trials
- The Employment anti-discrimination Act
- Greater acceptance
- Labour Party legislation since 1997

CONFIDENT CRUISING

Do you want to sharpen your cruising skills and build confidence? This one day course will help develop the confidence and skills to approach the men you like, negotiate the sex you want and enable you to say no when you want to.



The course runs from 10.00 to 5.00 on Saturday February 7th at Healthy Gay Nottingham. You can phone them for details on 0115 9476868 or book your place online at

www.gmfa.org.uk/national

DE-PINKING THE POUND

1954: The UK government established the Wolfenden committee to untangle the mess of legislation surrounding homosexuality. Over 300 people gave evidence, but none as surprisingly influential as American statistician Alfred Kinsey. His fairly rocky statistical analysis claimed 1 in 10 people had homosexual desire; if it was a problem, it was a far bigger one than first thought.

The committee finally recommended a partial retreat from the regulation of private behaviour. This became part of a broader set of social packages by the Wilson government that reformed abortion, capital punishment and divorce. Through the American ideals of civil liberties, individualism, and a new age of affluence, the swinging sixties were transforming the social landscape, and the transition would be anything but smooth. Activist groups demanded radical changes which bulldozed through stuffy British conformity and the Gay Liberation Front, with impregnable conviction, seized the opportunity to transform the fabric of intimate life in Britain.

It is within this tumultuous context that I set out in March to ponder on how gay sexuality has changed over sixty years. And, where better than Nottingham? After all, it's the city's intoxicating blend of proximity and anonymity which provides the spaces for sexual diversity and perversity to thrive. Quickly I discovered Nottinghamshire's Rainbow Heritage, an archive chronicling LGBT history in meticulous detail far beyond anything I could hope to achieve. And so mapping La Chic to the Admiral Duncan seemed pre-empted by a vast and impressive margin. Alternatively, I could recount the well-known story; nostalgically reflect on the decline of cottaging, observe the emergence of dance culture, explore civil partnerships. This all seemed obvious and fruitless.

Despondent and deflated I came across 'Cashing in, Coming out', an article by Peter Tatchell, prominent gay-rights campaigner. He claimed that rampant commercialisation and de-politicisation have doomed the gay community; consumerism has replaced human rights as the gay zeitgeist. This seemed deeply pessimistic, and immediately the focus of my entire agenda became one question: was he right? What unravels below is my attempt to answer this question, at least in the case of Nottingham.

Commercialisation has certainly gained weight: the "pink pound" and "the scene" are by far the most (over)used terms. However, what began to emerge was that far from pandemic commercialisation, the gay community is being de-commercialised (is Thatcher's impact still too deep to say nationalised?). There are more non-commercial actors and money, albeit less than needed, in the gay community now than at any time prior.

DE-PINKING THE POUND

Although we may not yet be at the stage where you are more likely to meet another gay man through a city council LGBT youth group or LGBT societies in the public (and it is almost entirely public) services. But the shape of Gaydom *is* changing. Nottingham was dominated by charities or companies in the early 70s, but today this seems more a charity/commercial/public triangle, where the NHS, minus the pervasive targets, publishes guides and run 'how to find a boyfriend' courses.

This is a curious public-private economy which is unlike anywhere else in society, and whether this is a product of political correctness or paranoia over HIV/AIDS seems trivial. Nottingham has failed to emerge as a gay tourist centre like Manchester or Brighton, and so the impact of this public money is particularly felt in the city. It has made notoriously cliquy gay society more democratic and inclusive than ever before.

As for Tatchell's rampant commercialisation: a glimpse at the closure of Niche, closure and re-opening of @D2, and the tribal (perhaps incestuous) conflicts between NG1, Pink and @D2, hardly have the trappings of transnational conglomerates pillaging Gay Nottingham for a cheap buck, and glancing through Rainbow Heritage's work shows this is not new.

Interestingly, this new economy changes the way sexual politics are organised. Many a person has recounted to me, and Tatchell would agree, the depressingly depoliticised nature of the gay community nowadays (especially the young). The carnival street politics of the 70s are perhaps gone for good. However, a quick gander into the past reveals with surprising clarity that the gay community was never really politicised; a handful of individuals were. They lobbied support through gay bars and groups, and I have been lucky enough to meet some contemporary counterparts, who have impressed me with their commitment and politics. It is these people who fill those jobs in the public sector, using low level lobbying which to me seems no less meaningful. The personal is political, and perhaps being confidently open about sexuality is as profound a statement as marching through the streets, or perhaps not.

Maybe the gay community doesn't have equality yet, but over the past 60 years we have seen a sexual revolution which has transformed intimate and erotic life. It is a good time to be a gay man; I am optimistic.

Discuss. (lgyajrh@nottingham.ac.uk)

Article by Jake Hodder

Lesbian & Gay Switchboard
 0115 934 8485 or 01623 621515
 Monday-Friday 7-9.30 pm
 7 Mansfield Road, Nottingham, NG1 3FB.
notts@lgswitchboard.fsnet.co.uk
www.nottslgs.org.uk
www.nlgshistory.ik.com

 Healthy Gay Nottingham
 0115 947 6868
 Monday-Friday daytimes
 c/o The Health Shop, Broad Street,
 Nottingham NG1 3AL.
 read more (and e-mail) via
www.healthygaynottingham.org.uk

 Police Homophobic Crime Helpline
 0800 085 8522

 Nottinghamshire's Rainbow Heritage
 c/o NVAC, 7 Mansfield Road,
 Nottingham NG1 3FB.
 0115 9349529
nottsrh@hotmail.co.uk
www.nottsrainbowheritage.org.uk

SOME LOCAL LISTINGS

- Breakout** Social group for gay & bisexual men. Tuesdays 7.30 pm (at the Health Shop) Contact Switchboard or HGN 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 HGN.
- 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 or e-mail outburst@nottinghamcity.gov.uk
- Lookout** The quarterly free lesbian newsletter. For details e-mail lookoutmag@hotmail.com

Details of the following local groups can be obtained from Switchboard:

Nottinghamshire Hiking Dykes; Notts Lesbian Book Club; Re-Creation; Trans-Action (TV/TS); Women's Badminton; Badminton Social; Lesbian and Gay Christian Movement; East Mercia MSC; the Chameleon Group; University of Nottingham & Trent University LGBT Societies; Peak Ruffties; Nottm Women's Film Group; Re-Creation; Bi Delight; Grizzly; LIRAIN; Notts Police OUTNetwork; Flying Colours; Nottm Bi Women's Group; LiNk-Notts; LAFS; Eat Out Nottingham; North Notts Gay Women's Walking Group; Ball Bois football team; Sparta Women's Football; The Open Walking Group; Tagadere: Weekenders; Sapphist Writer's Network; Gay Outdoor Club.

Switchboard has an accommodation file: if you are seeking flat/house share or have accommodation to offer, contact us; the service is free.

DIARY

BALLET FANS & QUEEN WITH MILK

Some events which, serendipitously, pop up in February are:

- **MILK** - the biopic of assassinated San Francisco mayor Harvey Milk. Showing at Broadway from January 23rd to Feb. 5th
- **Lady Windermere's Fan** - In his inimitable style, Oscar Wilde uncovers the hypocrisy and double values of society. Public reputation is important to everyone in this scenario and there appear to be no heroes or heroines as no one is entirely what they seem. Showing at the Lace Market Theatre from Feb. 9th to Feb. 14th.
- The world renowned **Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo** come to the Playhouse on Monday Feb. 23rd. Affectionately known as The Trocks, this company of professional male dancers presents an inspired blend of their loving knowledge of dance combined with their brilliant comic approach.
- **One Night Of Queen** - is "a stunning live 2 hour concert recreating and celebrating the music of Queen" starring "Stars in their Eyes" winner Gary Mullen. Feb. 1st at the Royal Concert Hall.

COUNTY COUNCIL CONSULTS

The **County Council** hope to develop their consultation processes with local LGBT people via a meeting on the 20th Feb. The time has still to be arranged, but the venue is the View from the Top above Waterstones - coinciding with that exhibition which has been mentioned once or twice before in this QB. If you are interested, contact Julia Hughes - jhughes@nandscvs.org

GAY HISTORY TOURS

During February, Tony Bilton will be running some of his much-appreciated Gay History Tours. Where was the "Pansy's Parlour"? Who owned the world's most expensive bathroom loofahs? Who was the Masquerader? Find out on the tour.

For more details + dates and times, e-mail Tony at pegasus.tour@amserve.com

LATE ARRIVALS

To hear about last minute additions to LGBT History Month events, go to the calendar on the National website at www.lgbthistorymonth.org.uk