

LGBT History Month

Celebrating our rich history

Lesbian, Gay, Bi and Trans History Month takes place every February. An opportunity to proudly showcase our diverse and dynamic LGBT communities, but also to shed light on our once hidden history.

Welcome to the LGBT History Month toolkit for 2014!

Lesbian, Gay, Bi and Trans History Month has been celebrated across the UK since February 2005. Each year the event has become bigger and better, and with your help this year will be the best yet. NUS LGBT campaign has produced this pack in order to provide you with the tools and ideas you need to make history this month!

Throughout the month of February, LGBT people will have the opportunity not only to proudly showcase our diverse and dynamic LGBT communities, but also to shed light on our once hidden history. There is another side to many of the well-known stories in history which deserves to be heard. So often LGBT people in the past have been rendered invisible – literally written out of history. LGBT history month is our opportunity to change that.

LGBT History Month can be what you make of it. You could hold a party to celebrate those LGBT figures of the past who have helped shape the world we live in today, or you could put up a display in your union about an important moment in LGBT history. Whatever you decide to do, this pack is designed to provide you with the tools and ideas to run your own LGBT History Month event.

This year, we are focussing on Real Education Change and looking at LGBT students' experiences of Higher Education and we are encouraging students to tell us about their experiences, More information can be found here:

And we are of course continuing work on Out in Sport, with a particular look at the Winter Olympics, what we can do to support LGBT athletes and the LGBT Community in Russia and make a stand against the discrimination they face. This also falls within our continued work on Love Without

Borders. The Winter Olympics are being held during February, so it is a perfect opportunity to both celebrate and take action during LGBT History Month. More information on this can be found here:

So get involved and have a fantastic LGBT History Month!

Sky Yarlett
LGBT Officer (Open place)

Finn McGodrick
LGBT Officer (Women's Place)

Why we celebrate LGBT History Month

Discrimination and intolerance breed from ignorance and fear. LGBT history month seeks to challenge that through education, offering a perspective of LGBT people which is representative and demonstrates the positive ways in which Lesbian, Gay, Bi and Trans people have affected world events through the ages. For millennia, ignorance has surrounded the lives of LGBT people and it is this very ignorance and lack of understanding about our diverse community that often leads to homophobia and transphobia.

From stories of 'molly houses' in London to gay bars in Edinburgh's Haymarket back in the 1920s to the empires of Greece and Rome, LGBT people have been present and contributing to society. The Stonewall riots may have been the beginning of our modern day movement but they were not the beginning of our history.

The history of our movement provides not just numerous stories of courage in the face of adversity, but teaches us lessons and better equips us for the liberation still to be won.

The extraordinary strength and courage that it must have taken in the early 1970s to march under the rainbow flag, standing up for your sexuality or gender identity when society viewed you so disparagingly, is a story which deserves to be told. LGBT people, suffering in Nazi concentration camps with pink or black triangles on their sleeves, must not be forgotten. And there are questions too. What was the impact of removing homosexuality from the World Health Organisation's list of mental disorders? How did civil partnerships change so fundamentally the way LGBT people live their lives? Just knowing that these events happened not only offers victories to celebrate and reminds us of atrocities to mourn, but also provides the basis for analysing what has and has not

worked, in what context, and why. By learning the lessons of the past, we can ensure its mistakes are never made again.

Claiming our past, celebrating the present, creating our future!

What can we do for LGBT History Month

As part of LGBT History Month you could run an event in your students' union. It doesn't have to be a large event if you don't want it to be and can be as simple as a poetry reading. Alternatively, you could create a display or a timeline which could become a permanent feature in your union building. If you are already planning an event in February as part of your calendar or possibly as part of an LGBT awareness week, why not incorporate it into LGBT History Month?

LGBT people, literature, films and events can all be used as the basis for an event. A fundamental aspect of LGBT History Month is the events that people hold to celebrate the lives and achievements of LGBT people.

What kind of events could we run?

Ideas for events include:

- An evening of readings from memoirs, biographies, poems and fiction
- Approach people in your area who are prepared to take part in an evening of talks and questions about LGBT life in the twentieth century
- If you live in a city, find someone who can conduct a guided walk round places of historical interest
- Organise a quiz (we've included several in this pack)
- Have a fancy dress party (dress up as a historical LGBT person)
- Invite a speaker to your LGBT Society
- Put up a display in your students' union or library (we've included an example in this pack)
- Organise an LGBT Valentines Dinner
- Hold a debate
- Put on a fashion show
- Show a film – or series of films - in your union with an LGBT theme
- Arrange a public lecture

- Organise an arts event with work by students at your institution reflecting on LGBT History Month
- Arrange a lecture on LGBT history
- Put on a play or performance in conjunction with your drama society
- Arrange a fundraising night at your union to raise money for an LGBT charity

How do I publicise my event?

The more effective the publicity for your event, the better and bigger it can be. There are many ways for you to publicise your LGBT History Month event, and these can include...

- On the NUS LGBT Facebook group
- Flyers
- Posters (remember when putting up posters to check your union's poster policy)
- Emails
- Website (your union and also the LGBT History Month website)
- Banners
- Using course reps/department reps
- Student newspaper/magazine
- Students' union and/or local radio and TV
- Notice boards
- Information stalls
- Contact other societies in your union
- Talking to students!

Remember that you are free to use the LGBT History Month logo which can be downloaded from the website at www.lgbthistorymonth.org.uk

Designing publicity tips:

- Always use a legible font and size
- Use a computer or design package (if available)
- Use graphics/images/photographs
- Don't overload posters with too much text or too many images.
- Use bold statements to attract attention
- Adhere to your union equal opportunities policy
- Shop around for printing facilities – photocopiers/in house reprographics/local printing firms

These are just a few ideas. Use your imagination! If you would like support with any event you are running, please get in touch.

The LGBT History Month website (www.lgbthistorymonth.org.uk) offers a facility for individual groups to advertise events, as well as find out about other events in the area. Don't forget to add your event to the list!

Case Study

Trinity St David Student's Union: Swansea's LGBT History Month.

As a society, we felt there were many different areas that we wanted to cover in this month. These are, LGBT and Mental Health, LGBT and Music, LGBT in Sport and LGBT and Computing.

In our first week, our university is taking part in Time To Talk Day (February 6th) and we are representing mental health from an LGBT perspective on this day.

In our second week, we are holding a Mardi Gras themed party in our student union bar with karaoke. We will have lists of karaoke to do with musicians who are part of the LGBT Community.

In our third week, we are holding a gender-neutral sports event. We are doing this in relation to the current events in Russia.

In our final week, we are holding a gaming event. We chose computing as the theme to remember the late Alan Turing for all the great they did but all the struggles they endured due to their identity.

We will be collecting signatures for our petition to get gender-neutral toilets on each campus too.

We'd love to see you all.

Carly Stewart, LGBT Officer 2013-2014, TSDSU – Swansea
And the TSDSU – Swansea Met LGBT Society

Trail Blazers profiles

As part of the history month, the campaign has chosen LGBT people. For the history Month, why not download the trail blazer pictures and upload them to social media and union websites, to download the banners, check out LGBT campaign page at NUS Connect . The profiles are:



Audre lorde, a writer and civil rights activist who is well known for campaigning for intersectionality.

Download the banner [HERE](#).



Harvey Milk, one of the first openly gay politicians who was elected to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.

Check out: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDH1RZI-3ww>

Download the banner [HERE](#).



Carol Ann Duffy, a poet and playwright, the first women and openly LGBT Poet Laureate in the UK.

Download the banner [HERE](#).



Laverne Cox, an American actress, television producer and trans advocate.

Download the banner [HERE](#).

LGBT History Timeline:

'To know nothing of what happened before you were born is to remain forever a child' – Cicero

LGBT people have always existed and will always exist. We have been kings and queens, politicians and protestors, musicians and writers, thinkers and activists. LGBT history shows us that we are not the only ones.

LGBT history is the history of people. Through learning about LGBT history, we can learn about the lives our ancestors led and the impact on them of social, political and economic change, and their impact on society. We can also learn about the legislation which had such a huge impact on the lives of those who came before us. This timeline is not exhaustive, but is intended to give a flavour of what life might have been like for LGBT people in the past.

1533 - Buggery Act introduced by Henry VIII brought sodomy within the scope of statute law and made it punishable by hanging.

1861 - Offences Against the Person Act formally abolished the death penalty for buggery in England and Wales.

1869 - First published use of the term 'homosexuality' (Homosexualität) by K.M. Kertbeny, a German-Hungarian campaigner.

1885 - Labouchere amendment passed 7 August (Section 11 of the Criminal Law Amendment Act). Created the offence of 'gross indecency' and thus became the first specifically anti-homosexual act.

1895 - The trials of Oscar Wilde and his sentencing to two years prison with hard labour under the 1885 Act.

1897 - George Cecil Ives organizes the first homosexual rights group in England, the Order of Chaeronea.

1921 - In England an attempt to make lesbianism illegal for the first time in Britain's history fails.

1923 - Lesbian Elsa Gidlow, born in England, published the first volume of openly lesbian love poetry in the United States, titled "On A Grey Thread."

1928 - *The Well of Loneliness* by Radclyffe Hall is published in the UK and later in the United States. This sparks great legal controversy and brings the topic of homosexuality to public conversation.

- 1957** – The Wolfenden Committee's report recommends decriminalizing consensual homosexual behaviour between adults in the United Kingdom
- 1959** – ITV, at the time the UK's only national commercial broadcaster, broadcasts the first gay drama, *South*, starring Peter Wyngarde.
- 1961** - Release of the film *Victim*, an early British film on a gay theme pleading for tolerance towards homosexuals.
- 1967** - Sexual Offences Act came into force in England & Wales and decriminalised homosexual acts between two men over 21 'in private.'
- 1969** - Scottish Minorities Group (SMG) founded on 9 May. Stonewall riot began in New York on the night of 27/28 June.
- 1970** - First ever organised lesbian and gay pride march took place on 28 June in New York City commemorating the previous year's Stonewall riot. London Gay Liberation Front (GLF) founded at the London School of Economics. First gay demonstration in the UK.
- 1971** - Lesbians invaded the platform of the Women's Liberation Conference in Skegness, demanding recognition.
- 1975** - Action for Lesbian Parents founded after three high-profile custody cases where lesbians were refused custody of their children.
- 1978** - International Gay Association (later becoming ILGA) launched.
- 1980** - Male homosexuality decriminalised in Scotland. European Commission ruled unanimously that the British government was guilty of breaching Article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights by refusing to legalise consenting homosexual behaviour. First black lesbian and gay group founded.
- 1982** - Male homosexuality decriminalised in Northern Ireland. Terrence Higgins Trust launched.
- 1984** - Chris Smith, MP for Islington South in London, first MP to come out as gay while in office.
- 1985** - South Wales miners joined the Pride march to thank lesbians and gay men who supported them during the coalminers strike.
- 1987** - A South Staffordshire councillor called for 90% of lesbians and gays to be gassed to prevent the spread of AIDS. The last National Lesbian and Gay Conference collapsed under factional in-fighting.
- 1988** - Section 28 introduced, preventing the 'promotion' of homosexuality by local authorities. 25,000 protested against it. Lesbians absented in the House of Lords and also

got into BBC1's newsroom in protest. The first British national conference for lesbians and gay men with disabilities was held.

1990 - Direct action group Outrage! set up in May after the murder in London of gay actor Michael Boothe.

1992 - London hosted the first Europride.

1994 - House of Commons voted to reduce gay male age of consent to 18.

1996 - Lisa Grant challenged South West Trains for employment discrimination.

1997 - On 1 May the British general election went to Labour and gave seats to out-gays Ben Bradshaw and Stephen Twigg. Labour MP Angela Eagle was the first lesbian British MP to come out voluntarily.

1999 - On 30 April, a bomb exploded in the Admiral Duncan, a gay pub in Old Compton Street, Soho. Three people died. The Court of Appeal support a right to treatment for gender reassignment under the National Health Service.

2000 - Government lifts the ban on lesbian and gay men serving in the armed forces.

2001 - Age of consent reduced to 16 for all. First same-sex partnerships registered in London at the GLA. Dr Tracie O'Keefe is awarded 140,000 after winning a claim for sex discrimination against her former training school, which blocked her accreditation after learning she had been born a man.

2002 - Equal rights granted to same sex couples applying for adoption. Alan Duncan became the first serving British Conservative Party MP to voluntarily come out publicly as gay.

2003 - Repeal of Section 28. Employment Equality (Sexual Orientation) Regulations became law on 1 December making it illegal to discriminate against lesbians, gay men and Bi people in the workplace.

2004 - Sexual Offences Act abolishes the crimes of buggery and gross indecency. Civil Partnership Act passed in November, giving same-sex couples the same rights and responsibilities as married heterosexual couples.

2005 - Government announces that the first civil partnerships for same-sex couples can be registered on 5 December, taking effect from 21 December (after the 15 day waiting period). Section 146 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 implemented in April, empowering courts to impose tougher sentences for offences aggravated or motivated by the victim's sexual orientation.

2004 - The Gender Recognition Act comes into law giving transsexual people legal recognition in their preferred gender (male or female), allowing them to acquire a new

birth certificate and affording them full recognition of their acquired gender in law for all purposes, including marriage.

2006 - The Equality Act 2006 - which establishes the CEHR and makes discrimination against lesbians and gay men in the provision of goods and services illegal - gains Royal assent on 16 February 2006.

2008 - The Sex Discrimination (Amendment of Legislation) Regulations 2008 — adds protection from discrimination for trans people in the areas of the provision of goods, services, facilities and premises.

2009 – Prime Minister Gordon Brown makes an official public apology on behalf of the British government for the way in which Alan Turing was chemically castrated for being gay, after the war. Opposition leader David Cameron apologises on behalf of the Conservative Party, for introducing Section 28 during Margaret Thatcher's third government.

2013- Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 passes through Parliament allowing for same sex marriages to be performed in the summer of 2014.

Useful links

Below are some useful links you can check out for more information about LGBT history month:

NUS LGBT Campaign connect page: <http://www.nusconnect.org.uk/campaigns/lgbt/>

LGBT History Month website: <http://lgbthistorymonth.org.uk/>

LGBT History Month Scotland website: <http://www.lgbthistory.org.uk/>

LGBT History Month events calendar: <http://lgbthistorymonth.org.uk/event-calendar/>

Schools Out: <http://www.schools-out.org.uk/>

Stonewall LGBT History Month page:

http://www.stonewall.org.uk/at_school/education_for_all/quick_links/lgbt_history_month_2013/

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Global Dimension LGBT History Month page:

<http://globaldimension.org.uk/calendar/event/4365>

Rainbow Jews (Celebrating LGBT Jewish History and Heritage in the UK):

<http://www.rainbowjews.com/rainbow-exhibition-launch/>

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