

# LGBT+ History Month Guide



 *Let us be  
enraged  
about injustice,  
but let us not be  
destroyed by it."*

Bayard Rustin

## **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 shed light on our once hidden history.

### **Welcome to the LGBT+ History Month Toolkit!**

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 in February!

Throughout the month of February, LGBT+ people will have the opportunity not only to proudly showcase our diverse and dynamic 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 an 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(s).

So get involved and have a fantastic LGBT+ History Month!

## Why should 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 can lead to LGBTphobia.

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, this is a story which deserves to be told. LGBT+ people, suffering in Nazi concentration camps with pink or black triangles on their sleeves, must never be forgotten. Our history is a history of atrocities and discrimination which we must remember, but it should also inspire us.

We've also had some huge wins for equality over the past few decades. What was the impact of removing homosexuality from the World Health Organisation's list of mental disorders? How did equal marriage change so fundamentally the way LGBT+ people live their lives? What about the reduction of the blood ban and the provision of PrEP, what difference have these advances made? These are cause to celebrate but should also inspire us, we still have a long way to go before we reach true equality.

Let's remember the atrocities and the victories of our deep and colourful history. We must harness the feelings they inspire within us to strive for an equal society.

## 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? It's also a really good idea to work with other societies in planning events, as you'll get more people to come along and increase participation within your society.

### 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
- Organise a quiz
- Have a fancy dress party (dress up as a historical LGBT person)
- Invite a speaker to you LGBT+ society
- Put up a display in your students' union or library

- Organise an LGBT+ Valentine's dinner
- Hold a debate
- Put on a fashion show
- Show a film – or series of films – in your union with an LGBT+ theme
- 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
- Student newspaper
- Students' Union
- Local radio and TV
- Notice boards
- Information stalls
- Through 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](http://www.lgbthistorymonth.org.uk)

Designing publicity tips:

- Always use a legible font and size
- 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 to support with any event you are running, please get in touch.

The LGBT+ History Month website ([www.lgbthistorymonth.org.uk](http://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 Studies

### Trinity St David Students' Union: Swansea's LGBT History Month – 2014

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

In their first week, Trinity St David took part in Time To Talk Day and represented mental health from an LGBT perspective on the day.

In the second week, they held a Mardi Gras themed party in our student union bar with karaoke. There were lists of karaoke to do with musicians who were part of the LGBT Community.

In the third week, they held a gender-neutral sports event. This was a topical events as it was done in relation to the current events in Russia.

In the final week, they held a gaming event. Computing was chosen 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.

Throughout the month they also collected signatures for their petition to get gender-neutral toilets on each campus too.

### *University of Sheffield Students Union – 2015*

Take a look here for the calendar of events Sheffield organised last year:



#### **WEDNESDAY 3rd FEBRUARY PARIS IS BURNING FILM SCREENING**

The 1990 documentary-film, Paris is Burning, has become iconic of the New York Ball Scene. Featuring the origins of 'shade', 'reading', and 'voguing', Paris is Burning and the Ball scene has dramatically influenced and shaped LGBT+ and Drag culture as we know it today. The documentary provides a compelling and entertaining account of black, queer life in New York during the glory days of one of the most transgressive subcultures since the Punk movement. Paris is Burning is rated 15. 18:30-20:15, Auditorium, free

**FRI 5th - SUN 7th FEBRUARY  
NATIONAL STUDENT PRIDE  
TRIP**  
Sheffield SU LGBT+ Committee will be running coach travel to National Student Pride, in London - for more info contact [lgbt@sheffield.ac.uk](mailto:lgbt@sheffield.ac.uk). National Student Pride is not run by or affiliated to Sheffield Students' Union £5 + Travel and Accommodation

**TUESDAY 16th FEBRUARY  
BAR ONE LGBT+ QUIZ**  
Come and join us in Bar One for an LGBT+ History Themed Quiz, bring a team and have your chance at leaving with prizes! 19:00-21:00, Bar One, free

**WEDNESDAY 17th FEBRUARY  
SUPPORTING SHEFFIELD'S LGBT+ YOUTH:  
A PANEL DISCUSSION**  
Growing up as an LGBT+ young person can be extremely difficult, and uniquely challenging - this Panel Discussion draws together leading Youth Charities from across Sheffield to discuss the many diverse ways we can support, empower, and mentor Sheffield's LGBT+ young people. Panelists will include speakers from: FruitBowl and Roundabout - and each panelist will introduce and explore different challenges for LGBT+ young people and their ongoing support; topics will include: LGBT+ Youth Homelessness, and Sexual Health, there will also be the chance to ask the panel questions. 18:00-19:00, Discovery Rooms, free

**MONDAY 22nd FEBRUARY  
SEXUAL HEALTH SHEFFIELD HIV SCREENING**  
Sexual Health Sheffield will be providing free and confidential HIV Screening - drop by the LGBT+ Lounge, no appointment needed. 16:00-19:00, Octagon Meeting Room 1/LGBT+ Lounge, free

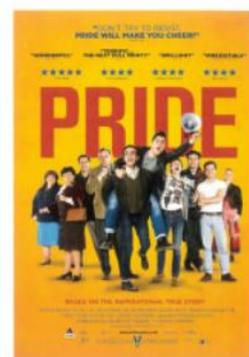


**WEDNESDAY 24th FEBRUARY  
ADDRESSING INTERSECTIONS:  
SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND  
MENTAL HEALTH**  
Sheffield SU is proud to welcome Liam Wilding of CrazyLife UK, our guest speaker; Liam will be sharing his experience of sexual violence and mental health, exploring the intersections, impacts, and interactions. Liam will be drawing from his own experiences, as a result this session will be hard hitting - relevant content notes will be given at the beginning of the event and a refuge space will be provided throughout the duration. 12:30-14:00, GR 3, free

**THURSDAY 25th FEBRUARY  
LGBT+ AND MENTAL HEALTH:  
A GUEST LECTURE**  
This guest lecture, from Dr Nuno Nodin, will discuss some of the mental health specificities and needs of LGBT+ people. Findings from the RaRE Research will be presented and discussed; this research was project led by PACE in partnership with academics from three universities and took place between 2010 and 2015. It looked at risk and resilience for three mental health issues that affect LGBT+ disproportionately. 19:00-21:00, LT3, The Diamond, free



**FRIDAY 26th FEBRUARY  
CLIMAX IS BURNING**  
Yorkshire's biggest LGBT clubbing celebrates LGBT History Month by holding its very own voguing battle, with big prizes on offer! 23:00-03:00, Foundry & Studio, £4.50 advance, £5.50 other



#### **MONDAY 29th FEBRUARY LGBT+ HISTORY EXHIBITION AND PRIDE SCREENING WITH LGSM GUEST APPEARANCE**

This year's flagship event, a History Month Exhibition, is brought to you by LGBT+ Committee, and promises to be the event you do not want to miss! Open throughout the day, the exhibition will include poster boards including: an LGBT+ Portrait Gallery, and the history of LGBT+ Organisations and Campaigners in Sheffield and the UK. The exhibition will include a screening of Pride, the critically acclaimed 2015 film, introduced by a representative from LGSM (Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners) - the charity the film is about! The Screening is due to start at 19:00, Pride is rated 15. 12:00-21:00, Foundry & Studio, free <http://hurselghtpride.eventbrite.co.uk>



## 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.

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' (Homosexualitat) 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.

**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.

**1967** - Sexual Offences Act came into force in England & Wales and decriminalised homosexual acts between two men over 21 'in private.'

**1969** - 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.

**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.

**1988** - Section 28 introduced, preventing the 'promotion' of homosexuality by local authorities. 25,000 protested against it. Lesbians abseiled in the House of Lords and also got into BBC1's newsroom in protest.

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

**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.

**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.

**2004** - The Gender Recognition Act comes into law giving transgender 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 makes discrimination against lesbians and gay men in the provision of goods and services illegal - gains Royal assent on 16 February.

**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/](http://www.stonewall.org.uk/at_school/education_for_all/quick_links/lgbt_history_month_2013/)

**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/>