

TOWERING TURING

BLETCHLEY PARK UNVEILS GAY STATUE



Alan Turing was the inspirational mathematician at the heart of Britain's crucial Enigma-code-breaking successes during World War Two, based at Bletchley Park in Milton Keynes – which has now unveiled a one-and-a-half ton, life-size statue of the genius, by internationally-renowned sculptor, Stephen Kettle. Some historians claim Turing's work helped shorten the war by two years, saving countless lives. In 1952, at a time when homosexuality was illegal in the UK, Turing was convicted of having a sexual relationship with another man - to which he made no defence other than to say he

saw nothing wrong in his actions. He was sentenced to a treatment that amounted to chemical castration; and died after biting into an apple he had laced with cyanide. The poignant symbol of the munched apple aptly lives on, to this day, in Apple's famous rainbow logo. More info at: www.bletchleypark.org.uk



NEWS FLASHES INTERNATION NEWS

SÃO PAULO:

Three million Brazilians have taken part in São Paulo's 11th Gay Pride, marching down the main Avenida Paulista – making it easily the world's largest such event. The mayor, governor and several ministers all took part.

LITHUANIA:

An estimated 2.5 million queer and gay-applauding revellers converged on Madrid to celebrate EuroPride; and to salute Spain's socialist government for bringing in legislation that has transformed what was once one of the continent's most staunchly conservative nations into a beacon of homo-hope - an example to the world, not least to nearby neighbours in Eastern Europe.

OUTSPOKEN: SEBASTIAN ROCCA



THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE UK LESBIAN & GAY IMMIGRATION GROUP CLAIMS ASYLUM SEEKERS ARE BEING FAILED BY THE UK

If you are an LGBT asylum seeker then – according to numerous official refusal letters issued on behalf of the UK government – you can just go straight back to where you came from; and conceal your homosexuality to avoid harm. You can go home, hide your true self, never live with your partner and deny the very core of your identity.

Would we tolerate such a situation ourselves, in our own country? If not, should we return desperate people, seeking help, home to face such inhuman discrimination elsewhere?

**...LEAVING THEIR HOME
COUNTRY IS NOT A MATTER OF
CHOICE – APART FROM THE
CHOICE OF LIFE OVER DEATH**

For many LGBT asylum seekers, leaving their home country is not a matter of choice – apart from the choice of life over death. Most of us here are lucky enough to have little idea what that means. When the UK Lesbian and Gay Immigration Group (formerly Stonewall Immigration Group) began in 1993, our main challenge was to win the right for same sex couples with a foreign partner to remain together in the UK. Our long and painstaking battle achieved gradually increasing rights until equality was finally reached in December 2005, when the first civil partnerships took place. As we became aware that this goal would be achieved, the focus of our work moved to providing legal support to LGBT asylum seekers. Despite legal LGBT-related advances in the UK, in more than 80 member states of the United Nations, consensual acts between same sex adults are still criminalized.

Sometimes the focus of the media and politicians is on the small number of unfounded claims for asylum or on the rapidly increasing number of asylum seekers removed from the UK, rather than on the real issues and real people behind such numbers. This emphasis creates a culture of disbelief and lack of trust within communities, rather than promoting genuine 'social integration' – words very popular with politicians. Few people know, for example, that many African lesbians come to the UK and claim asylum because they are raped or threatened with genital mutilation by members of their families or their community, in an attempt to 'turn them straight'.

There is very little support available for LGBT asylum seekers in this country; and our project is a vital lifeline. It is a place to meet others struggling with similar issues and a source of quality legal advice, of practical and emotional support and – importantly – of hope.

To make a donation or find out more about the UK Lesbian & Gay Immigration Group's work: www.uklgig.org.uk.

...AND FINALLY



HUGH'S HOOKER CLAIMS ALL'S DIVINE!

Divine Brown, the former prostitute best known for her arrest whilst giving Hugh Grant a fifty buck blow job, claims she is eternally grateful to the aging star for publicity that reputedly earned her over \$1.6 million. Gushed she: "Everything worked out for the better. I was blessed that it could get me out of that lifestyle. I love Hugh Grant. He put my kids through school.

US CIRCUMCISION RATE: CUT

Every year, worldwide, around 10 million Muslims, one million all-American boys, 100,000 Jews and sundry others – totting to about 1 in 6 males worldwide – have the foreskin that billions of years of evolution has bestowed on them, severed from their manhoods. Although controversial, circumcision is the most commonly-practiced medical procedure on Earth. Yet latest stats show, in no small part due to the large influx of the nation's Asian and Latin immigrants, the US circumcision rate – which peaked at 90% back in the early 60s – has now been slashed to just 57%; in some states, being well below half. That said, some are predicting a fight back – in the light of recent studies suggesting circumcision could well drastically reduce the rate of HIV infection!

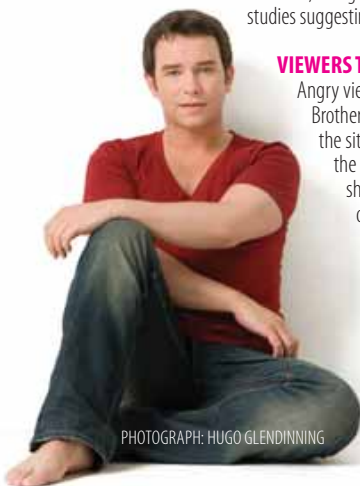
VIEWERS TUNE INTO HOMOPHOBIA ON BIG BROTHER

Angry viewers wrote in to Ofcom regarding the use of the word 'poof' on Channel 4's Big Brother. The show has been accused of double standards over how they have handled the situation following contestant Emily being sent home earlier in the series for using the word 'nigger'. On the show aired on Sunday 1 July, BB contestant Laura laughed as she jokingly called Liam a 'poof', but viewers have queried how this discrimination differed from the earlier incident.

GATELY ANNOUNCES NEW TOUR

Stephen Gately has been announced as the leading role in the rock opera musical Godspell, which will tour this autumn. The former Boyzone star and gay singer recently did a spell on ITV's Dancing On Ice but after previous West End appearances he can't wait to return to the stage. Godspell is being hyped as the new high-energy modern-day song-and-dance production depicts the last days of Jesus through its uplifting music.

Tour Information Line - 01584 873912.



PHOTOGRAPH: HUGO GLENDINNING