

LGBT History Month is an opportunity for all of us to learn more about the histories of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

There are many examples of how LGBT people have made important contributions to society and their legacy is one that not only the LGBT community but the whole world can celebrate.



SIR IAN MCKELLEN
1933 -

At home equally in Hollywood blockbusters or intimate theatre productions, Ian McKellen is one of the greatest living British actors. As an ambassador for the LGBT community his 'coming out' in response to Section 28 in the late eighties helped him co-found the gay rights campaigning group Stonewall.



WILL YOUNG
1979 -

English singer songwriter and actor who rose to fame after winning the first ever Pop Idol contest. In March 2002, Young revealed that he was gay, to pre-empt a tabloid newspaper that was preparing to run a story outing him. He also stated that he had never hidden, and was comfortable with his sexuality.



ANGELA EAGLE
1961 -

Member of Parliament for Wallasey. She became British Parliament's first openly lesbian member by coming out in September 1997. She also became the first female MP to tie the knot in a civil partnership with her partner of 18 years in 2008.



DUSTY SPRINGFIELD OBE
1939 - 1999

Acknowledged as probably the best female pop singer Britain has ever produced at a time when women in entertainment were largely underrated. Springfield challenged apartheid in 1960's South Africa and was deported for playing to multi-racial audiences. After much speculation she acknowledged she was attracted to people of the same sex in 1970.

QUENTIN CRISP
1908-1999

A key (but reluctant) figure in the fight for lesbian and gay visibility, Crisp lived his life in open contrast to the social norm. His humorous self-proclaimed nickname of "one of the stately homos of England" and high profile raised the collective awareness of gay people among heterosexuals.



JANE LYNCH
1960 -

American actress Jane Lynch has worked in movies and theatre for years, but it is the role of Sue Sylvester in Glee that has propelled her to fame. In 2010 Lynch married her partner Lara Embry, and she has won an Emmy and a Golden Globe for her portrayal of Glee's cheerleading coach.



ELLEN DEGENERES
1958 -

American stand-up comedienne and host of the award winning talk show The Ellen DeGeneres Show and has hosted Academy Awards (Oscars). She starred in two television sitcoms, Ellen and The Ellen Show. In 1997, she came out publicly as lesbian in an appearance on The Oprah Winfrey Show.



GARETH THOMAS
1974 -

Wales' most capped rugby union player came out as gay in December 2009. His club career includes a Welsh Premier Division title in 2003, and a Heineken Cup Victory in 2005. He has also been capped by the British Lions and is now playing rugby league in the European Super League for Crusaders. He is a patron of LGBT History Month.



JACKIE KAY MBE
1961 -

Poet and novelist. "It just so happens that I am black, Scottish and a lesbian - and I'm quite proud of that. It's annoying because people only get defined by difference. It would be great if they had a 'white writers' section in a book shop as it would challenge peoples' assumptions."



JUSTIN FASHANU
1961 - 1998

The only professional footballer to date to publicly declare his homosexuality. Justin Fashanu endured racist and homophobic abuse throughout his football career. One of the tragedies of Justin Fashanu's story is that homophobia in football still prevails.



ALAN TURING
1912 - 1954

Turing was a British mathematician, considered by many to be the father of modern computer science. During the Second World War he helped to crack the Enigma machine code (which was used to send secret military messages). Many historians believe that this was central in bringing the war in Europe to an end.



OSCAR WILDE
1854 - 1900

Irish playwright, poet and author of numerous short stories and one novel. He became one of the most successful playwrights of the late Victorian era and one of the greatest celebrities of his day. Wilde suffered a dramatic downfall as the result of a widely covered series of trials when homosexuality was illegal.



APRIL ASHLEY
1935 -

April developed a successful career as a model, worked in films and became a notable celebrity during the 1960's. April has recently moved back to live in the UK, and has long campaigned to raise awareness for social equality and help the hundreds of people with gender issues all over the world who contact her for advice.



CAROL ANN DUFFY OBE
1955 -

Poet, playwright and freelance writer who is the most popular living poet in Britain. Duffy was appointed the British Poet Laureate in 2009. She is the first woman, Scot and openly gay person to take the post.



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