



The Gay & Lesbian  
Humanist Association

## ANNUAL REPORT 2009/10

### Chair's report



It's a pleasure to report to you as Chair as we look forward to our 2010 annual weekend and AGM. I took over the reins from Andrew Copson around January this year and thank him for all his work. We've had an excellent few months full of activity. Personal highlights

include the hugely successful weekend around IDAHO where it was my honour to host a busy Conway Hall with many voices important to Humanism, not to mention the antics of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence. London Pride was excellent this year and more details on Prides follow later. Otherwise the preparations for the Papal visit this September have kept us busy.

The strategic priority this year was achieving a sustainable base for the future, looking at the size and growth of membership, the pool of Committee members, our media profile and ensuring we have money in bank. You can read about our progress under the various headings. We are moving to a formal system of budget-setting and financial reporting and have audited membership rates.

Last year members encouraged the Committee to take a fresh look at the annual events of the AGM, the lunch and the weekend. The 2011 AGM will be in London with the annual weekend being retained but as a separate event planned earlier in the year, perhaps around Springtime. This resolves a long-standing issue of having the weekend and the annual lunch close together. Given how much work goes into organising the weekend, we propose that the next one will therefore be 2012. This allows time for us to think how to rejuvenate the weekend and attract a broader base of membership. I welcome opinion on these plans for the Committee to consider.

The priorities for next year, subject to endorsement by the new Committee, include constitutional reform, widening participation and diversity and a more precise focus on a series of campaigns. In the meantime we continue to pursue our application for charitable status and are preparing a comprehensive submission to the Charity Commission.

#### Looking ahead

Coming up is our annual lunch. While Stephen Fry is a hard act to follow, we're honoured to welcome Darren Hayes, who first came to fame as one half of pop duo Savage Garden, as guest of honour at our special annual lunch. We've been discussing with him a speech about his personal 'coming out' story and how it relates to the fight for LGBT rights.

I hope as many of you as possible can attend, but submit my apologies here for not being at that event. My partner Slawek and I shortly embark on an adventure in India and Nepal. With the agreement of the new Committee, my intention is that GALHA will continue during that time under the leadership of Mike Rickwood who has kindly offered to deputise the Chair.

A final thanks to all our members. Without you there would be no GALHA and I hope you realise how important your support is to us and the causes we promote. Please get in touch with your comments or ideas on how GALHA can improve in its mission to promote LGBT rights and Humanism. Email me on [chair@galha.org](mailto:chair@galha.org). If you're in London, I'll happily join you for a cup of tea.

All the best,

Adam Knowles  
**GALHA Chair**



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### Membership

Since the 2009 AGM we've gained 51 new members, so welcome to them! This is an increase of nearly 20%, bringing our active membership to 321. We look forward to making further plans for the next year to increase both membership numbers and diversity. Thank you to all members that have renewed their membership this year: your dues are almost exclusively responsible for keeping the organisation financially viable. We hope you will continue to support GALHA in the future.

### Public Events

This period was characterised by a wide variety of well publicised and received public events attended by record audiences.

For the International Day against Homophobia and Transphobia (IDAHO), GALHA organised three events in one weekend in May as its contribution to this worldwide campaign. On the Friday before IDAHO day, a debate on homophobia in



Derek Lennard, Events Co-ordinator

Africa between Leo Igwe and the Reverend Rowland Jide Macaulay took place, for the following day GALHA arranged a London "kiss-in against homophobia and transphobia" with the Central London Humanists, and on the eve of IDAHO Day a record audience of well over 200 saw the film "Suddenly Last Winter" (a personal account of homophobia in Italy) with the Directors and stars of the film answering questions from the audience. At this last event Leo Igwe received the special international Rainbow Humanist Award for his enormous

contribution to LGBT Rights and Humanism. Thanks are due to the generosity of GALHA members and the Campaign for Homosexual Equality (CHE) in funding Leo's visit to the UK.



Announcement of the Rainbow Humanist Award at GALHA's event at Conway Hall

For LGBT History Month, the Brockway Room was packed with a very enthusiastic audience for the "Vinyl Closet" – a historical exploration of gay and lesbian themes in popular music by LGBT activists Brett Lock and Ted Brown - an event that inspired enthusiastic comments all over the place. An earlier and rather different perspective of LGBT History (but no less enthusiastically received) was a talk about Edward Carpenter by Sheila Rowbotham.

Two more films were shown to big audiences over the year which illustrated various aspects of LGBT everyday life from an arguably humanistic perspective: The Power of Harmony (in January), and the UK Premiere of "La Folle Histoire d'Amour de Simon Eskenazy" in March. We celebrated the 80th Anniversary of the opening of Conway Hall in December with a special performance giving an historical account of its highlights and another dramatisation "Battle for Dover Soul" focussing on the battle against Creationism in schools in the US.



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GALHA's public events now always exceed 50 people. Thanks are due to Paul Burston for publicising them in Time Out London and for the hard work of those involved in publicity.

## GALHA Online

GALHA's online presence consists of the website at galha.org, the email discussion group (hosted by Yahoo), our Facebook pages, YouTube channel (videos), Flickr collection (photos) and the meetup.com (events) site.

The website has been kept up-to-date throughout the year with all our press releases, newsletters (which are archived there) and events. It has also benefited from a new section about Humanism and definition of terms written by Henry Lawson. Our support of the Protest The Pope campaign features currently.

This year we added an online shop open to the public to buy GALHA-branded slogan T-shirts, badges, stickers and caps. This was driven by frequent requests from those we meet at events and on stalls to make them available, so if you're interested to buy something and support GALHA, please visit the site.



The GALHA website

Our Facebook page continues to attract fans. Since October 2009 the number has more than

doubled from 215 to over 550. The mix of these fans in gender, age and race is more diverse than the general membership.

The meetup.com group is at galhameetup.com. As well as moving to that friendlier web address this year the group, which focuses on the real world, face-to-face events the Committee organises in London, has gained many members to provide us a current total of 177.

For both our Facebook and meetup.com communities, we keep in touch as frequently as we're able, telling them about GALHA's activities, events and campaigns and hope to build up a relationship that we can migrate to formal membership with the financial support that offers.

Our moderated email discussion group continues to attract new people and is a vital source of information for the Committee with most of the traffic made up of relevant press releases and journalistic articles.

## Plans for GALHA online

We're looking to move to online booking and payment for the annual events starting with the 2010 annual lunch. We are exploring options for taking the membership records, renewals and sign up process online, though the advantages need to be weighed against cost.

We are also keen to start a Twitter stream on behalf of GALHA to engage with audiences by that mechanism which is highly suited to an organisation involved in campaigns and demos such as ourselves. Twitter has worked well for the National Secular Society for instance and Stephen Fry last year tweeting about GALHA on the day of our annual lunch brought significant traffic.



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## Press and Communications Report

What do Cinderella, Rasputin and the current Pope all have in common? This unlikely trio have all featured prominently in the 22 press releases and notices that GALHA has issued over the past year.

Protests against the state visit of Benedict XVI have naturally loomed large, with a clear distinction being drawn between the Pope's right to visit the UK and express his controversial opinions as a religious leader, and his being lauded and feted in an expensive state visit.

We marked Britain's May General Election with our very own GALHA Election Manifesto highlighting a broad range of issues relating to gay rights and freedom of opinion. Other releases have covered specific issues of legal rights in the UK including Marriage Equality and the rights of gay asylum seekers.

We wrote to David Cameron and Nick Clegg earlier in the year to congratulate them on their election to government and ensure they are aware of GALHA's work.

With most battles for legal equality in the UK now won - with the notable exception of marriage rights, the focus has shifted to social problems, such as anti gay violence, and perhaps most significantly to covering the many threats to gay people and Humanists in other parts of the world. Our press releases have highlighted problems and outrages in countries as diverse as Nigeria, Uganda, Malawi, Indonesia, the USA and Italy.

A number of these releases have been picked up by The Pink Paper, Pink News and UK Gay News. Other press coverage has included a feature article in Time Out London, by acclaimed author Paul Burston, and a Daily Mirror quotation from GALHA Secretary David Christmas making what we guess was his debut

as a tabloid correspondent, defending the right of gay people to be Cabinet Ministers. The fact we needed to defend this basic common sense idea is evidence of the work that still needs to be done.



GALHA featured in Time Out London, Dec 2009

## List of press releases issued

- 30 Sep 09 Gay Humanists Lead Demo Against Papal Visit
- 30 Sep 09 Gay Humanists to Protest Against Plans for Papal Visit to Britain
- 21 Oct 09 Gay Humanists Warn: Vatican and Italian Government Have Blood on their Hands
- 28 Oct 09 Gay Humanists Back Trafalgar Square Vigil and Demand Wider Action



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- 14 Nov 09 Stephen Fry wins 2009 Award from Gay Humanists
- 29 Nov 09 Gay Humanists Support EU Directive Banning Anti-Gay Discrimination
- 7 Dec 09 Gay Humanists Condemn Anti Gay Legislation in Uganda
- 14 Jan 10 Gay Humanists Condemn Igwe Arrest as Political Persecution
- 21 Jan 10 Gay Humanists Question Rasputin Tactics of Religious Lobby
- 2 Feb 10 Gay Humanists Thank Pope for Reinforcing Case for Secularism
- 15 Feb 10 Protest the Pope protest - report
- 15 Mar 10 UK's Gay Humanists say Lesbian Cinderella Should Go to the Ball
- 28 Mar 10 Gay Humanists Condemn Surrender to Anti-Gay Mob
- 21 Apr 10 Gay Humanists Publish 2010 "Election Manifesto"
- 24 Apr 10 Gay Humanists Warn Against "Anti Gay" Street Pastors
- 2 May 10 Gay Humanists Defend Legal Rulings Against Religious Backlash
- 17 May 10 International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia
- 23 May 10 Gay Humanists Condemn Obscene Punishments for Gay Couple
- 18 Jun 10 Gay Humanists Support London Rally Against Sharia Law
- 20 Jun 10 GALHA Representative Addresses Rally Against Sharia Law
- 7 Jul 10 Gay Humanists Praise UK Gay Asylum Ruling
- 20 Aug 10 UK Gay Humanists Reiterate Support for Marriage Equality

GALHA Chair Adam Knowles has appeared on BBC national radio (5 Live) a couple of times to speak on issues of the day relevant to LGBT rights. Adam also assisted more recently in a Protest The Pope story by BBC's local TV evening news about the quickly sold-out T-shirts created by the NSS saying 'Pope, Nope'. Many on the Committee have undertaken formal speaker training this year.

## The newsletter

In 2009-10 we achieved our target of six full-colour, high quality newsletters distributed to members by post and to the public online. All issues met publication deadlines. The format has developed to include news of GALHA activities, notices of events, opinion pieces and an editorial focussing broadly upon LGBT equality issues and Humanism. There have also been items featuring the diversity of the Association and some of its members. It is hoped that the use of photographs has given the publication added impact and that some lightness of tone has made it more readable. The scoop photo of the year was Chair Adam Knowles and committee member Sue Robson pictured under the GALHA banner at a Protest the Pope rally. Perhaps the best headline was: 'Fry UP For GALHA lunch'. Thanks are due to all contributors and to our designer, Brett Lock.



An edition of GALHA news (May 2010)

## Out at Pride

Our visibility is important; LGBT Prides are still regarded as our main community events across the country. In 2010 we attended Birmingham, London, Brighton and Manchester; Sue Robson and Julia Wright carried the banner and handed out GALHA literature at Bournemouth Pride and Julia did the same for us at Bristol Pride. We produced new postcards for this year and



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printed thousands to hand out at these events. We gave away several hundred to enthusiastic recipients during the London Pride parade, which we did this year instead of a stall at Trafalgar Square. The general opinion was that we reached more people this way and it was great fun on the sunny summer day that greeted us this year (for once!).

Pride co-ordinator Paul Allen comments, "The new postcards are well designed, easy to carry and lots in number. If there is more interest then a colour leaflet follows accompanied by a smile. Over the 3 years I've been co-ordinating the GALHA Pride presence, we have people come back each year. Many are pleased to see an alternative to the religious or gaudy T-shirt and sex toy stalls."



Pride co-ordinator Paul Allen with Tyrone Curtis at Birmingham Pride

We've struggled again this year to gain GALHA members to come out and help at the stalls, an irony perhaps since the LGBT community first used Pride Marches, rather than what are now 'Parades' to raised their visibility. If you can help in 2011 in any way, please do get in touch with Paul Allen <[a href="mailto:paul@peacenik.me.uk">paul@peacenik.me.uk>.

Huge thanks to Paul for his hard work again this year. Many thanks also go to GALHA members Sue, Julia, Gary, Ifor and Tyrone plus the other Committee members that turned out for London

Pride. We benefited from invaluable support from Adrian from Birmingham Humanists, Robert from Brighton and Hove Humanists and John Coss and the six volunteers from the Greater Manchester Humanists who ran the stall at the 3 day Manchester event.

### The 2009 AGM and annual weekend

GALHA's 2009 AGM and annual weekend conference were held in Newcastle in September. Events included a guided tour of the city, a talk by Dr. Matthew Waites on Humanism and LGBT rights, and a discussion led by Mike Rickwood on ideas for GALHA's future. There was plenty of opportunity for informal discussion among the people present, both members and non-members. A raffle held during the weekend raised £130, donated to LGBT activists in Iraq.

### The 2009 lunch



The GALHA Lunch 2009 at Brown's, Covent Garden

Guest of honour Stephen Fry brought a celebrity touch to the 2009 lunch, but his work on LGBT rights and promoting Humanism is alone worth great praise. After moving to a larger venue, we still sold every ticket available for the prestigious Courtroom One at Brown's of Covent Garden. Stephen posed for photographs and was convivial with all who wanted to speak with him. His after-lunch speech captivated the audience with an inspiring variety of topics dealt with in his



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raconteur style. He told how the fight for LGBT rights is the fight for human rights and, in the end, justice for all. He reinforced his support of the movement promoting Humanism and accepted a role as GALHA Vice President. GALHA presented Stephen an award for his work and we thank Stephen for accepting our invitation.

### Protest the Pope

At the forefront of our minds on campaigns this year was the Papal visit September 2010. GALHA was a founding member of the coalition set up to protest against the Holy See being given the honour of a State visit (see <http://www.protest-the-pope.org.uk/>), with partners including the National Secular Society (<http://www.secularism.org.uk/>), the British Humanist Association (<http://www.humanism.org.uk/>) and Central London Humanists (<http://www.centrallondonhumanists.org/>). Marco Tranchino and Peter Tatchell are contributing a great deal. GALHA has been active in the campaign throughout the year, contributing to ideas, speakers, publicity and co-ordination. The main march and rally will be held in central London on Sep 18th 2010.

### Committee

The outgoing 2009 Committee was:

- Adam Knowles (Chair)
- David Christmas (Secretary)
- Mike Rickwood (Treasurer)
- Derek Lennard (Events co-ordinator)
- Malcolm Trahearn (GALHA news editor)
- Henry Lawson (Press and Communications)
- Tyrone Curtis (Membership Secretary)
- Sue Robson (co-opted)
- Julia Wright (co-opted)

### Non-committee assistance

- Paul Allen (Pride co-ordinator)
- Alan Trevethan and friends (Events barkeep) from the Kent and Medway Humanist Association ([kamha.org.uk](http://kamha.org.uk))
- Stuart McCaighy (copywriter)

Adam Knowles comments, "I thank every one of the Committee and our non-committee assistants for a year of very hard work. Our previous Chair Andrew Copson left early this year and deserves immense credit for sterling stewardship during his tenure. I also need to thank those that are leaving the Committee shortly, specifically David Christmas, Tyrone Curtis and Julia Wright. Tyrone has been an excellent membership secretary for us and will continue to help the organisation with events and online social media. Julia has supported our events and Pride programme. David deserves special mention for the pivotal role he has undertaken in the organisation for many, many years and his insight, wisdom and organisational skills will be sorely missed. I thank them on behalf of the membership and wish them well."

There are vacancies on the Committee heading into 2010/11 so we encourage members to put themselves forward for election or co-option. GALHA's wide range of activity needs a full committee to carry out its work. Other than becoming a formal Committee member, we are always grateful for offers of assistance in any area. Please visit <http://www.galha.org/galha-needs-you/> to find out more.

### President and Vice Presidents

We are grateful to Maureen Duffy for her continued role as GALHA President. The list of Vice Presidents is available on our website.

We wrote to Evan Harris recently to offer him our thanks for his vital work promoting LGBT rights during his time as MP, which has ended at least for the time being.

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Accounts for the year ended 31 July 2010

## INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

2008/09		2009/10
£	Note	£
<b>INCOME</b>		
2,401.00	Standing Order subscriptions	2,303.00
<u>2,563.61</u>	Other subscriptions	<u>2,385.77</u>
4,964.61	Total Subscriptions	4,688.77
487.00	Donations received by GALHA	1,227.86
48.00	Affiliations	124.96
191.27	Interest income after tax	7.22
105.20	Weekend event 2009 (Loss) / Surplus	117.00
	Annual lunch 2009 (Loss) / Surplus	
	Conway Hall Events	670.27
	Books, etc	<u>50.00</u>
<u>51.19</u>	Income (excluding bequests)	<u><b>6,641.38</b></u>
<u><b>5,832.50</b></u>		
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
1,469.96	Magazine/Newsletter (net of sales & adverts)	4,174.81
12.07	Stationery	39.07
472.25	Post, telephone & fax	228.40
-	Conway Hall Events (Monthly)	624.31
-	Pride Events	565.34
	Other Events (including Leo Igwe)	1,347.39
2,794.84	Advertising and publicity	669.00
296.32	Committee meetings	352.89
160.00	Affiliations to other organisations	299.42
162.00	Conference Fees paid to BHA	-
-	Fees paid to Solicitor	94.00
102.82	Donations (net of funds raised) and Awards	0.00
52.06	GALHA Internet Domain and Renewals & Other	35.00
134.82	Inland Revenue payment on previous year's accounts	53.48
240.48	Other Expenses	<u>15.00</u>
<u><b>5,680.44</b></u>	Total expenditure	<u><b>8,498.11</b></u>
152.04	Surplus/deficit for the year before bequests	
0.00	Bequests	12,128.86
<u><b>£ 152.04</b></u>	Total surplus/deficit for the year	<u><b>£ 10,272.13</b></u>

## BALANCE SHEET

2008/09		2009/10
£		£
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
-	Scottish Widows	15,000.00
11,127.66	Deposit account	4,134.88
3,594.95	Current account	4,118.83
	Prepayments re weekend event September 2010	<u>500.00</u>
<u>14,722.61</u>		23,753.71
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
-2,561.01	Subscriptions in advance	-£2,127.75
-902.78	Miscellaneous Creditors	£0.00
<u>-1,685.00</u>	Creditors: re Weekend Event September 2010	<u>-£1,780.00</u>
-5,148.79		-3,907.75
<u><b>£ 9,573.83</b></u>	<b>Net Assets</b>	<u><b>£ 19,845.96</b></u>
<b>REPRESENTED BY:</b>		
18,617.87	Bequests: accumulated total	£8,417.87
-	Plus additional legacies for current year	£12,128.86
<u>-10,200.00</u>	less 1993 amount to Pink Triangle Trust	<u>£0.00</u>
8,417.87		20,546.73
1,003.92	Accumulated General Fund	1,155.96
152.04	Surplus/(deficit) for the current year	<u>-1,856.73</u>
1,155.96		-700.77
<u><b>£ 9,573.83</b></u>		<u><b>£ 19,845.96</b></u>

## NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

Reference to the amount of £10,200 which has previously been shown as held in trust by the Pink Triangle Trust has been removed on the grounds that it is not a legally enforceable debt.

## TREASURER'S REPORT

I hereby submit the GALHA accounts for the year ended 31 July 2010. The year was notable for the receipt of a bequest of £12,128.86. As you will also see, however, the organisation made an operating loss of £1,856.73. Notable items of expenditure were: £4,272.37 on the Newsletter (up from £1372.40), because a) printing no longer benefits from external funding b) of an increased cost for printing and distributing the annual report / AGM minutes to members - and the Leo Igwe visit £1174, largely offset by donations of £800. In our new financial circumstances, however, there is a clear need to find new sources of income.

**31 August 2010, Mike Rickwood, Treasurer**

## AUDITOR'S REPORT

I have examined the above Income & Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet and confirm that they have been properly prepared in accordance with the records, information and explanations supplied to me.

**1 September 2010, Colin Swinburn, Auditor FCA(NZ)**