

# August Newsletter – Members’ Stories Edition

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## Welcome to our special *Members' Stories Edition* of the Staff Pride Network Newsletter

We hope you enjoy this newsletter focussed on YOU, our members. Our Communications & Media Team have been involved in all manner of developments over the last year and they have managed to deliver amazing projects including the glossy newsletter at the end of 2016. To deliver a simpler, regular newsletter, they set up this Mailchimp format and with the launch of our logo made it look pretty. I hope you agree. This fascinating edition brings together event reports, personal stories, university experiences and Staff Pride Network influencing, from January 2017. We would love to hear from you about your events, experiences and all that interests you which make up our wonderful LGBT+ community.

Please note, you will only be able to link to the full-length articles on our members SharePoint so please email us at [staffpridenetwork@ed.ac.uk](mailto:staffpridenetwork@ed.ac.uk) to be added, whether LGBT+ colleague/PHD student, or straight/non-LGBT+ ally. Follow our Twitter for regular SPN updates @uestaffpride.  
Until next time,  
Jonathan

### Contents

- Debbie Aitken – Coming Out To Students
- Ali McDonald – LGBT & Internationalisation
- Anabel Noelke/Jonathan MacBride – LGBT+ Research Promoted In The University
- Susan Thomson – Ghost Empire screening: A Response
- Gina Maya Roberts – LGBT+ History Month Asexual Awareness Evening
- Tammy French – Speyside Way Challenge
- Jonathan MacBride – Out in Edinburgh, Mental Health & Wellbeing
- Oliver Wain – Joining the University of Edinburgh

## Debbie Aitken – Coming Out To Students

After attending the newly formed Staff Pride Network and realising that the staff LGBT+ community is much bigger and more diverse than I ever imagined, I felt empowered to be open with an entire lecture theatre full of students in the medical school about my identity as a LGBT+ person. I was talking to the medical students about seeing each patient as a whole person, and how it's important to remember that what they might think an LGBT+ patient looks like isn't necessarily always very accurate. [Read more here](#)

## Ali McDonald – LGBT & Internationalisation

In January along with two colleagues I attended the Stonewall Scotland LGBT and Internationalisation Seminar, hosted by the University of Dundee. Having worked in International Student Support for over 8 years and more recently becoming a Staff Dignity and Respect Advisor, this sounded right up my street. [Read more here](#)

## Anabel Noelke/Jonathan MacBride – LGBT+ Research Promoted In The University

As part of February's LGBT+ History Month calendar, Anabel Noelke hosted a seminar 'LGBT+ and the Media'. Both staff and students attended and after an introduction and video showing her research Anabel led a vibrant discussion. The following month Anabel presented her research at Dentusu in London and has since been published in a journal. The following email was sent on 15<sup>th</sup> March to the entire Business School staff mailing list and it made me proud to see my workplace promoting a colleague's work in the LGBT+ sphere. [Read more here](#)

## Susan Thomson – Ghost Empire screening: A Response

A documentary trilogy which I directed, Ghost Empire 5 Singapore, Ghost Empire 5 Cyprus (about the Turkish occupied North of Cyprus), as well as the trailer for Ghost Empire 5 Belize which is currently in postproduction, screened at Edinburgh University on the evening of Thursday 23rd Feb 2017 supported by the LGBT+ staff network as part of LGBT+ History Month. The films look at the British colonial legacy of (now 36) former colonies, which continue to criminalise homosexuality, around the world. [Read more here](#)

## Gina Maya Roberts – LGBT+ History Month Asexual Awareness Evening

The organizers had booked a narrow room with a table for twenty. By the time they'd closed the door for the screening, sixty people had arrived. Asexuality, clearly, is a subject of interest not to be underestimated. It makes sense in our hyper-sexualized society to ask the question, 'Is it just me, who finds the media's sexual blitzkrieg overwhelming?' It's easy to imagine the weariness of an asexual-identifying person confronted with the daily stream of images in pop culture, and seeing themselves as outsiders and wanting greater recognition, and accommodation. [Read more here.](#)

## Tammy French – Speyside Way Challenge

My fiancée and I completed the 66 mile trek along the Speyside Way in March. Our group raised a great £581.32 that will be divided between the charities Calaid and Help for Heroes. The trek was challenging but luckily I didn't get. [Read more here](#)

## Jonathan MacBride – Out in Edinburgh, Mental Health & Wellbeing

April's Out In Edinburgh focused on mental health and wellbeing, with presentations from the lead counsellor at LGBT Health & Wellbeing's counselling service, a staff member from Health In Mind, Napier University's Head of Student Counselling and Wellbeing Services and a Barclays staff network member who talked about some of their positive initiatives to make the workplace a healthier place for its staff and that embracing diversity within the company can have a positive impact in the outside world. [Read more here](#)

## Oliver Wain – Joining The University of Edinburgh

When I stumbled across the Administrative Assistant job at Edinburgh University Careers Service, I knew it was a job I should apply for. What I didn't know was whether Edinburgh University was an employer that would support me in my transition – having socially transitioned but being on the lengthy waiting lists for medical assistance. So, I began my research: First, based on my last job interview with Stonewall (Programmes officer for the diversity champions program!), I checked if University of Edinburgh were a Stonewall Diversity Champion. Check, they were, awesome. Heading in the right direction. Looks promising. [Read more here](#)

### Events

#### SPN Social

Date: 1 September 2017  
Time: 17:30-21:00

Location: The Potting Shed

Drop by for a social drink with members and the committee at this fully accessible venue.

#### SPN Coffee Afternoon – A Celebration Of Allies

Date: 13 September 2017  
Time: 13:00-15:00

Location: Teviot Library Bar, Committee Room

Join us at our regular monthly coffee afternoon. There is a Celebration Of Allies theme this month for which the result will be revealed in one week's time. Please drop in any time for a coffee and cake, catch up with your LGBT+ colleagues and ask a committee member those questions you've been dying to have answered!

Full Events Calendar  
Useful Information  
Contacts & Committee  
Help, Support & Advice  
[staffpridenetwork@ed.ac.uk](mailto:staffpridenetwork@ed.ac.uk)



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# **Festival Digest – 16th August**