



happenings

Returning to a Brand New Place: - Reflections of my Return to Bucknell

by Ted Burnes '00

It was like I just left...but at the same time like I had never been there. I drove onto Bucknell's campus on a foggy day in April 2004 and took a deep breath. I was nervous, scared, and excited. I had not been back to campus since November of 2001, and I had recently been asked back to campus as a speaker and to do a series of workshops for campus. Over the next seven days, I would be talking in classes, giving a presentation, and connecting with old friends. I drew a deep breathe – was I ready for this? My nervousness came in part from my memories of my years as a Bucknell student. I had been out as a gay male on campus, been an RA, worked at the LGBT Concerns Office, worked at the 7th Street Café. I had worked for change in campus climate toward LGBT individuals. I had partied on frat row and in houses throughout downtown Lewisburg. I had received hate e-mails for my activist work that threatened my life based on my sexual orientation. I had made some of the best friendships ever...what would the next seven days hold for me?

My experience returning to Bucknell was one that exemplifies to me what can happen if enough people work and strive for change. I spent seven days at Bucknell, and it was probably one of the more glorifying experiences I've had as an alumnus. For starters, I walked into the LGBT Awareness Office my first day on campus, a student affairs space that I had spent much time in as an undergraduate. In the four years since my departure, the office had nearly doubled in size (moving across the hall to a larger space), and had changed its name from the "LGB Concerns Office" to the "LGBT Awareness Office". Such a name change was quite symbolic for me: my queer community was no longer a "concern" on campus, but was a more inclusive community (for trans folks) of which the campus community should be "aware". I stood in the office, watching two student assistants answer phone calls, make posters, and plan events. Such activity was quite a change from my days as an office employee, in which the phone didn't ring and there was hardly any activity. I remembered this office, but at the same time it was a whole new place. **It was like I just left...but at the same time like I had never been there.** This office visit sparked a nostalgic vigor in me, a real desire to want to know Bucknell and its growth since I had left. Was Bucknell really more accepting of queer students? I began what seemed like a small ethnography project, usurping as much Bucknell culture as possible. I hung out late into the night at the 7th street café, the "countercultural

campus mecca", to do my work and hang out with queer students. I attended student group meetings of FLAG&BT (friends of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons) and Sirens (feminist student group) meetings. I attended and/or spoke in classes with queer content matter, speaking with professors and lecturers about their experiences with queer issues in the classroom. I went to a showing and discussion of the movie *Boys Don't Cry* held by Bucknell's Race/Gender Resource Center, and listened to students deconstruct media depictions of gender. These various experiences on campus helped me to realize that not only had I changed, but so had campus – Bucknell was really trying to be more friendly to LGBT students...and, on some levels, was succeeding. However, my greatest memory of my trip to Bucknell was none of the above, but rather the meeting of some amazing student activists. Through my week at Bucknell, I had the pleasure of befriending three queer student activists, all of whom held a fire for their work that re-ignited my own dedication to make Bucknell a safer place. I had lunch with these students, we studied together, we ran around campus, they asked me questions such as, "Is it really true that when you were here they...?", and "If I wanted to go to grad school and do queer stuff, should I...?" We explored activist slogans for signs that would shake-up the campus community, and I gave historical perspectives on planning for events. They exclaimed to me, "It is so good to have you here, Ted...it's like we learn about our history." I was jokingly called "big brother", "geezer", and "the ancient one." I realized that not only had Bucknell changed, but so had my role in its community. I could be a mentor to current students, a mentor they needed and were excited about having. I could be the mentor I had wanted when I was at Bucknell. **It was like I just left...but at the same time like I had never been there.** My experiences at Bucknell altered my thoughts about my alma mater as an institution, and helped me to realize that the work I had done to change campus climate had taken root, was being built upon, and was taken farther than I had ever thought possible. I had never been to this Bucknell before – but I am definitely excited to go back.

Ted Burnes '00 is currently a Ph.D. candidate in Counseling Psychology at the University of California, Santa Barbara, where he is finishing his dissertation on identity development of lesbian and bisexual college women of color. He teaches classes in feminist psychological practice and runs counseling support groups for LGBT youth and for transgender individuals.

BUCKNELL

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NOTE: The deadline for submissions for the spring '05 issue is April 1st, 2005. Send or e-mail them to galabi@bucknell.edu or mcdaniel@bucknell.edu

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greetings

Finally, at long last, the promised newsletter arrives at a mailbox near you... Greetings from Lewisburg and Bucknell! We have been extremely fortunate to have some eloquent articles to include in this resurrected newsletter. We would like to publish at least twice a year (fall & spring), more often, if we get lots of submissions. We will have a regular column of "happenings": marriages, births, promotions, memorials, and significant events that you would like to publish. Additionally, if you have an article or photo you would like to share, please send it to us. We will also post the newsletter (in color) on the GALABI web page. Please include your name, e-mail and phone number so we can contact you if we need to. We won't publish your name if so requested. Our contact info is at left.

I would also like to add that you don't have to identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender to be included in our mailing list and publication. Several of the graduating seniors who have been involved in FLAG&BT or the LGBT office have expressed a wish to stay connected. We are also including submissions from the current students (prospective alums) and will continue to ask for their input on how we can help make their experience better, and / or provide networking possibilities before and after graduation.

Several alums in the NYC area got together for an evening in June. If you are interested in getting a group together, finding out if there are any other like-minded alums in your area, or just communicating on a regular basis I would urge you to check out the YAHOO! Bucknell GALABI e-group. To subscribe go to http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Bucknell_GALABI/. You'll have to "subscribe" in order to post messages to the group. We tend to communicate in waves, but there are only 25 members in the group as of mid September.

The campus climate is changing due to the hard work of Fran and activist students. Throughout this publication are quotes from BU students after attending RA training, safe space, and classrom presentations by the students and staff of the LGBT office.

As always if this mailing has reached you in error, please call or e-mail us and have your name removed from the list. If you know someone who would like to be placed on our *totally confidential* mailing list, please have them contact us.

~ Ann Bidelspach '80

Join us on campus
for a performance by
the Kinsey Sicks

*America's
Premiere Dragapella Beautyshop
Quartet*

Saturday, April 16, 2004

*(sponsored by the Office of LGBT Awareness,
ACE, and other campus organizations)*

Consider making it an alternative to coming back for Reunion weekend. Let us know if you are interested and we can plan events!

homecoming 2004

We would like to have you join us for Homecoming this year. In addition to the "business" meeting and brunch there are events that are planned just for us (and our friends)! Come see what's happening, hook up with old friends and make some new ones. As always your partner or significant other is invited to join the festivities as well.

Events: Nov 5th-6th

Friday

GALABI Reception

- 7:00 pm - Arches Lounge
- 3rd floor LC

Saturday

Business Meeting

-10:30 am - Rm 302 - LC

Brunch

-12 noon - Refectory - LC

Poetry Slam

-9:00 pm - 7th St. Cafe

Note: *If you would like to participate in the poetry slam, contact Deb Wilson at (570) 577-3303 for information.*

Don't let the idea of a business meeting scare you away! You can learn all sorts of things, and get involved if you choose. We would like to elect officers, but nobody will be conscripted against their will. It is helpful to have a few folks to be the leadership voices. It gives us more validity and recognition as an alumni organization within the campus community.

“**gay?** fine by bucknell”

by Alyssa Schneebaum '06

Last semester, I took part in one of the most incredible events that I never would have dreamed would occur here at Bucknell. The Office of LGBT Awareness-headed by our director Fran McDaniel and FLAG&BT decided to launch the **gay? fine by me**. campaign that was started at Duke University in 2003. The response the University gave us simply blew us away.

On that day in April, a few of us (LGBT student office staff) took about 25 shirts down to the Langone Center to give out anyone who would sign a pledge card, promising to wear the shirt on Jeans Day. We took only 25 t-shirts on the first trip due to our perception that most students at Bucknell would be too afraid or apathetic to wear such a blatantly supportive piece of clothing.

In ten minutes, we were out of t-shirts in the LC. I skipped up the hill to the LGBT Office to grab some more. Four trips later, I was too exhausted to skip, and my arms were tired from carrying 150 shirts. I could hardly believe what was going on.

When we completely ran out of shirts to give out, the student staff practically buzzed up the hill to tell Fran how completely excited we were. But alas! she had no time to talk with us; she was swamped with students, faculty, and staff coming into the office looking for t-shirts. These people were hungry beasts, looking for some delicious social change!

All of the staff members in the office could not stop hugging each other, laughing, jumping up and down. Finally-all the work we do, all the hours we put in, all the times we have told our friends to please consider what they mean when they say “that’s so gay” - it’s paying off!!

I went back to my dorm room that afternoon, and sent an e-mail to everyone I know (yes, including my parents). I bragged about how far we have come in the last few years, how proud I am to be affiliated with the

LGBT Office, and how thankful I am of everyone who showed support, with or without, a t-shirt. That day, I truly experienced the overwhelming joy that comes from being a part of something good.

Jeans Day rolled around and many wearing the shirts met on the stairs of the Rooke Chemistry building to take a picture. I felt such a sense of accomplishment, because I knew my work had touched people and allowed a few of them to wear their shirts comfortably. You can see in the picture that the student office staff and all of our friends and allies are simply beaming with pride about what great strides this campus has made in terms of truly celebrating diversity.

Somewhere in the excitement, the Office of the Deans of Students and the Office of the President gave us more money and we were able to distribute over 600 shirts in total. Can you imagine? Six Hundred and Two proud allies walking around Bucknell. Wearing their opinions right on their clothes, where those of us who need to see it can get a clear view. Students, faculty, and staff still wear their shirts regularly, and this continuous support speaks volumes to everyone. Seeing the shirts today are especially helpful to LGBT students, out or not, because we can so clearly see that our peers and teachers are acknowledging us and accepting us. The shirts have really helped the environment at Bucknell.

The **gay? fine by me**. campaign really rocked Bucknell, and showed us all how far we've come, and how fast we are really making a change.

"I am glad that students spoke out about anti-gay feelings at Bucknell because then no one can ignore that it is happening here."

~BU student

"Hearing the students talk about their experience was very touching and effective because we know and respect them as our peers."

~BU student

The 4th Annual "National Coming Out Day Support List" will be published in "the Bucknellian" on October 8, 2004. Check it out on the LGBT Office website and see if your favorite Bucknell Professor or staff member has signed up.

if I'm interested,
how do I?

Several Funds are available for those who would like to support LGBT programming on campus. Contact information is included. Any donations should be specifically designated for the fund of your choice.

The Schlegel-Deibler Memorial Endowment Fund

The spendable income from this Fund shall be used to support staffing, programming and activities that foster a supportive environment in which gay/lesbian/bisexual students, as a part of their overall education, can confidentially and in an atmosphere of tolerance, explore their identities. Income from this Fund may also be used to support programming encouraging tolerance of diverse sexual orientations for the broader student body and campus community.

For more information contact:

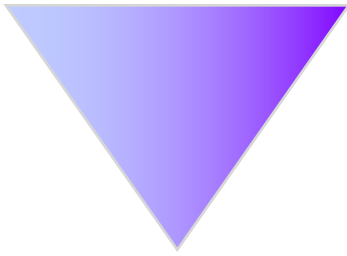
Kathy Graham, Dir. of Gift Planning
University Relations, Bucknell Univ,
Lewisburg, PA 17837

The Office of LGBT Awareness

Donations to the office will be placed in a "Designated Fund". The income from this fund is disbursed for programs benefiting the LGBT community and furthering awareness of LGBT issues at Bucknell. Monies can also be used to co-sponsor programs, or events at the Director's discretion.

For more information contact:

Director, Office of LGBT Awareness
Roberts Hall 100B, Bucknell University
Lewisburg, PA 17837



**Office of LGBT Awareness
Fall 2004 Calendar**

October

October 2: Stop the Hate
Rally/Peace and Justice Festival,
Hufnagel Park

October 10: "Trembling Before G-D"
7:00 pm Campus Theater

October 11:
National Coming Out Day

October 11:
Experience the Bucknell Closet,
LC 241 C&D

October 11:
Film: "Gay Pioneers", 12 noon,
Center Room, LC

October 12:
Rita Mae Brown, 7:30 pm,
Bucknell Hall

October 19:
3rd Tuesday LGBT Film Series,
"Big Eden", 7:30 pm,
Gallery Theatre, LC

October 29:
"Rocky Horror Picture Show",
11 pm, Campus Theatre

November

November 16:
3rd Tuesday LGBT Film Series,
"Everything Relative", 7:30 pm,
Gallery Theatre, LC.

December

December 1: World AIDS Day

December 1:
"Women Are Leading Change:
Women and HIV/AIDS",
noon & 5:00 pm,
Gallery Theatre, LC

happenings...

*Weddings, births, adoptions,
memorials, promotions, and special
events that you would like to share...*

Congratulations go out to Kathy Davis '98 and her partner Jonna Kosalko married on August 29, 2004! Kathy married Jonna, her partner of over three years in a legal ceremony in the garden of their favorite Provincetown, MA restaurant, Ciro and Sal's. Kathy writes: "It was a great time, the weather was great and everyone really enjoyed themselves. We even had a few folks ask to take our picture before the ceremony, and the Justice of the Peace told us that a lot of folks on the Cape are excited by the "history-making" aspect of same-sex marriages, and love to be a part of them or witness them whenever they can. This held true, since as we completed our vows, not only our guests, but an entire porch full of people at the home next door applauded."

Best Wishes and Congrats to Robb Fessler '84 and his partner Michael Sadowski who were married on June 19 on Cape Cod (in Sagamore Beach, Massachusetts) by Justice of the Peace Donna Modest. Sixteen guests were in attendance, including Robb's sister, Audrey Fessler (BU '82). Michael and Robb were "couple # 57" in Cambridge, Massachusetts the night they registered same-sex couples for their marriage licences. The press was everywhere that night, and they were seen on a few news outlets (including ABC and MTV). Their wedding pictures are on weddingprints.com under the names Robb Fessler and Michael Sadowski (the password to see their site is "love").

Thank You!!! to Rob Tyrrell for his recent gift to the "LGBT Designated Fund". This donation was earmarked to purchase gay? fine by me. t-shirts to distribute to the 1st year, transfer and spring "study abroad" students.

**Check out
the LGBT Office webpage
for upcoming events and news.
[www.bucknell.edu/About_Bucknell/
Offices_Resources/LGBT](http://www.bucknell.edu/About_Bucknell/Offices_Resources/LGBT)**

From the Desk
of the **Director**:

Dear Bucknell LGBT and Allies Alumni,
As I begin my 7th year at Bucknell, I am excited about our growth and progress, but we continue to search for new ways to increase the campus' awareness and sensitivity to LGBT issues. There still is homophobia here, but the changes can be measured by positive responses that we continue to receive on program evaluations.

Some of the changes are: RA's openly demonstrating to their residents that "Being gay isn't a crime. Gay bashing is." by displaying the sign in their halls. The poster shows up all over campus, including the athletic facilities, to outline the legal consequences of harassment based upon sexual orientation. Sororities have added a non-discrimination policy to their chapter by-laws. "Out" LGBT students have been selected for Homecoming honors. "National Coming Out Day" is recognized by the Bucknell Bookstore, where during a week in October rainbow buttons, magnets & pins, LGBT postcards, books, mugs, calendars, and magnetic art have a prominent display (and over Parents' Weekend too!). Over 300 faculty, administration and staff publicly support "National Coming Out Day" by appearing on a list printed in the Bucknellian.

These are but a few of the changes I have seen happen at your alma mater in recent years. Come back and see for yourself, and meet the LGBT students and allies that are making it happen! Join us today to "continue the work already begun..."

Sincerely,
Fran

Four Years Nearly Wasted: Coming Out (Nearly) After Graduation

by Kathy Davis '98

A letter to the editor of the Bucknellian changed my entire life. It sounds dramatic, even sensational; I mean really, how could a weekly (if that often) campus newspaper really change anyone's life? But I can honestly say that it did...everything I am today is a result of the one letter that I read, and another that I wrote. Two letters gave me the courage to be who I am, and to tell that to the people around me.

For the most part, I was a perfectly ordinary Bucknell student, an English and Sociology double major who worked in the training room, member of a sorority, frequent attendee at frat parties on the weekends, spending far more time hanging out with friends than studying. By the spring of my senior year I was living downtown with four of my closest friends and generally dreading graduation and the "real world" that loomed after it. I had been accepted to law school in California and was finishing out my time traveling with the softball team as their trainer. This worked out quite conveniently, as two of my roommates and my best friend played softball, so I basically got paid to tend to injuries and hang out with my friends. Yet things started to change that semester, as I began to try to figure out why, with all these things going for me, I wasn't truly content, or comfortable with myself. From time to time I had wondered if I might have more than a normal curiosity about certain GLBT issues, but I generally chalked that up to many recent English projects which all seemed to concern the feminine mystique.

In the midst of all of this, came that fateful letter in the Bucknellian, written by a sophomore named David Carpenter. It was a very touching account of what it was like to come out as a first-year student on the Bucknell campus. I enjoyed the letter, but didn't give it much thought until the following week, when a parent of a fellow senior wrote to the paper with the message that David should just keep his stories to himself

since no one needed to read that. Upon reading this letter I was outraged, more than I had ever been in my life. I felt as if that parent had been talking to me, had basically told me to shut up. And slowly, as I wrote my letter that would serve as the dividing line between who I was then and who I am today, I realized that he HAD been talking to me, because David had done and said the things that I was scared to do.

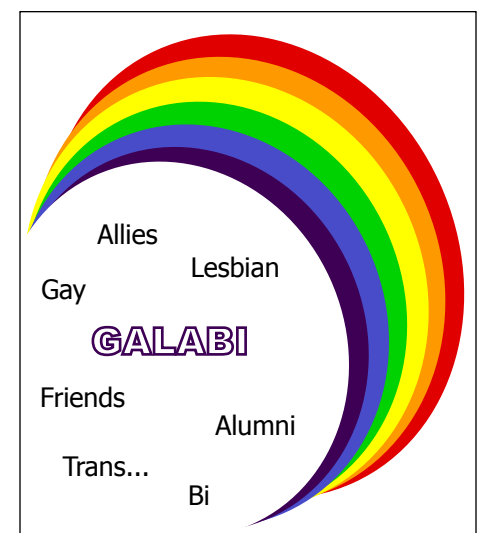
I didn't "officially" come out in my response letter, but I guess I didn't really need to. In the days that followed, I met David and became much closer with Stacey Waite (once she realized I was the actual author of that letter). To this day I count the two of them as some of my closest friends from Bucknell, Stacey, who received many a late-night phone call as a result of my newfound dating life, and David, who I caught up with in New York City after he graduated and who I spent many a late night/early morning with.

All in all, I generally ended my days at Bucknell just as confused and excited as a wide-eyed first-year. Sure, it wasn't all good - that best friend from the softball team slowly removed herself from my life, and spoke to me exactly one time after I officially came out to her. In fact, I can probably count on one hand the people I keep in touch with from my "other" life at Bucknell. But Stacey and David, and the other folks I met in those last few weeks of school, and the freedom I felt in the days thereafter more than made up for the friends I lost.

These days it's hard for me to remember a time before I was out, and folks who know my partner and I almost always guess that she was the one who didn't really come out until after college. At first, I felt like I had cheated somehow, lived the life of your "average Bucknellian" without the fears or problems others had encountered on campus, and came out with one foot out the door, the easy way. But I was never treated like that by any of the members of GALABI, or the GLBT students I met

on my first visit back to campus. And folks like Cindy and Fran made me feel so welcome when I attended my first homecoming and GALABI brunch, even though it also served as my first GLBT event on campus.

I've since realized that we all come out in our own time, and that I just happened to be a later bloomer than some. Although I may have missed out on a certain amount of grief and prejudice by coming out after graduation, I also missed the camaraderie and love that I saw between the GALABI and FLAG&BT members the day I finally returned to campus as a lesbian. To others in my position, I would have this advice: listen to that voice inside that wonders "what if" and do so as soon as you start to hear it. Don't wait like I did, because you're probably missing out on far more fun than you're having in your "so-called normal Bucknell life." Besides, how many frat parties you attended doesn't really make pleasant conversation out here in the real world, so go attend a FLAG&BT event, (or just pick up the latest copy of the Bucknellian), because you might learn a thing or two about yourself.



**"It is very courageous of the students to stand up for what they believe in, and who they are."
~BU student**

“Gay Paris, Prague, Rome, and London: Reflections on a semester abroad”

By Lee Cromwell '05

Bucknell offers a lot to its students, and one of these special qualities is a top-rated study abroad program. I have always had a fascination with England and the English culture; consequently, I decided to spend six months abroad studying music and theatre at a London University. I studied at Royal Holloway, which is one of the University of London schools located in the suburbs west of London. I lived in a town called Egham in the county of Surrey (where Harry Potter comes from), and shared a flat on campus with 5 other students. It was a great way to get to know people and make friends, as I lived with people from America, Greece, England, Monaco and Luxembourg. I joined an LGBT group on campus called FREEDOM. It was a great way to meet LGBT friends and allies via social events and theme parties while exploring the gay culture of London.

I loved my school and had lots of great experiences there, but the best part was being so close to London. I took the train into the city at least twice a week. I saw tons of great theatre, music, opera, and art. One of my favourite (thought I would throw in some British spelling and lingo) things to do was to walk along the south bank of the river Thames and "people watch", while exploring the public gardens and different areas of London. Mastering the tube system was a piece of cake and it was fun to go to Soho, Chinatown, Notting Hill, and the West End. I went to Brighton, a gay beach resort town on the southern coast of England. Walking along the pebble beach and hearing the sounds of the stones crashing against each other is a sound that I will never forget.

I was able to travel in Continental Europe as well. I saw an opera in Prague, experienced a show at the original Moulin Rouge in Paris, went to the Vatican in Rome, explored the canals of Venice, and was overwhelmed with all the art of Florence. There is such freedom and exhilaration while traveling in Europe and not having any specific plans for the day; instead you can wander the streets and back alleys and find some of the coolest places and people. In Prague my best friend and I discovered a tiny jazz café just off the one of the main squares that wasn't filled with crazy tourists.

"The presentation from the Office of LGBT Awareness made me realize how much it can hurt to use the word "gay" in a negative connotation."

~BU student

"This is an important issue on campus, everyone should have a program about it."

~BU student

"It must have been so hard to open up to an environment that the student once considered hostile. Our thanks to her, our sisterhood grew as a result."

~BU student

"I learned that any step, no matter how small, towards equality, is important."

~BU student

We listened to jazz music and tried (mostly unsuccessfully) to communicate with the locals in our horrific Czech and their broken English. Being on my own for 6 months helped me become confident in traveling and being secure in who I am.

I loved my study abroad experience. I literally stayed in England until the day before my six-month student visa expired before I flew back across the pond (as the saying goes) to the US. Though it is a good thing to be back at Bucknell for my senior year, I feel a piece of my heart will always remain in England. As an openly LGBT student at Bucknell, it was really great to explore new cultures and new experiences. Surely this is one of the areas in which Bucknell has and will continue to excel.

“Third Tuesday LGBT film Series”

by Chad Freilino '06

Nothing says glamour and glitter quite like queer film, and that is exactly why I am extremely excited to be coordinating the Third Tuesday LGBT Film Series sponsored by the Office of LGBT Awareness this year. This Film series is a celebration of queer cinema from old classics to modern blockbusters.

The film series was started in 2001 with a focus on the range of representations of gays in cinema, and addressing gender issues as well. Six films are shown each year, each focusing on a different aspect of queer life in cinema, including: gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender issues, and of course, the classics. Each film is introduced by a professor who, after the film, leads the viewers in a discussion of the issues presented. The success of this series is due, in part, to the professors who use the showings to facilitate classroom discussions by making the viewings part of the curriculum. The viewings are open to both the Bucknell and Lewisburg communities. This series has been fun and quite productive. This semester's film list includes, "Victor/Victoria", "Big Eden", and "Everything Relative". Next semester is still open so if you want to suggest any good films to include on the list, don't hesitate to call the LGBT Awareness Office!