

# The Nottingham Spirit: Yesterday - today - and for our tomorrows

TALK AT THE SPARROWS' NEST, St Ann's, by Ray Gosling.

Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2009 at 7.30pm

Phone: 07913 720136 or email [info@thesparrowsnest.org.uk](mailto:info@thesparrowsnest.org.uk) to book  
& for the location of The Sparrows' Nest. Web: <http://thesparrowsnest.org.uk>



[Ray Gosling](#) is broadcaster, activist, journalist, free spirit and enthusiast for Nottingham & author of [Robin Hood Rides Again - a rebel scene](#) in Anarchy 38 of 1964.

Following text is from Wikipedia: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ray\\_Gosling](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ray_Gosling)

**Ray Gosling** is an English journalist, author, broadcaster and gay rights activist.

He was born in Chester in 1939, brought up in [Northampton](#), and educated at [Northampton Grammar School](#) and [Leicester University](#). He moved to [Nottingham](#) and became a detached outreach youth worker in the inner-city working-class [St Ann's district](#), and at the age of 23 he wrote an autobiographical account of this work, *Sum Total*.

Gosling has always maintained a home in Nottingham, while being based in Manchester for much of his broadcasting work.



The Sparrows' Nest was established by the [Anarchist Federation's Nottingham group](#) with the involvement of other class struggle anarchists. It is a 'Centre for Anarchist Culture and Education', in a house, in St. Ann's. The Library and Archive is our major project. We set it up to inform people about the ideology and history of Anarchism in its many forms, and about working class struggles in our region.



In the 1960s and 1970s he was one of the best known faces in television documentary programming.

In this period he also hosted a weekly North-West regional programme on Granada TV, *On Site*, in which members of the public, in a different town each week, confronted officialdom with their concerns and complaints.

In many of his documentaries on BBC Radio he used his distinctively quirky writing style to point up the rich diversity of people and places in Britain. Some of his best-remembered radio programmes were personal portraits of a series of different towns.

In 2000 he returned to television in a series of documentaries about his personal life over recent years. This led to him being taken on by BBC East Midlands in 2004 as a regular presenter on *Inside Out* where he continues to report in his own individual style. His first film for *Inside Out* revisited his first TV documentary, *Two Town Mad*, made for the BBC in 1962. It was a comparison between Leicester and Nottingham and Ray went back to the places and the people in the original film.



Next came films on Garden Gnomes, Statues and Bus Travel. And among others OAP workers Frugal Living, new Arts buildings, and Windmills. His film on Joe Orton was part of a programme which won the RTS Midlands Best Regional programme in 2008.

His [BBC Four](#) documentary *Ray Gosling OAP* beat off tough competition from [Alan Sugar's The Apprentice](#) to collect the Jonathan Gili Award For Most Entertaining Documentary Award at Grierson 2007. It followed the highly acclaimed BBC Four documentaries '[Bankrupt](#)' and '[Pensioned Off](#)'.

Recent radio contributions have included items on BBC Radio 4's [You and Yours](#) in 2008 and 2009.

The value of Gosling's work was recognised by [Nottingham Trent University](#) in 2005, when it stepped in to save "an amazing treasure trove of groundbreaking TV and radio work which was in danger of being lost forever".



The veteran broadcaster's archive, which includes films, tapes, scripts, cuttings and background notes providing a fascinating perspective on 40 years of social history, is now safely preserved within the School of Arts, Communication and Culture



Ray Gosling was an early pioneer of the modern British gay rights movement, working with [Allan Horsfall](#) in the North West Homosexual Law Reform Committee of the late 1960s, which later became the [Campaign for Homosexual Equality](#) (CHE). Horsfall and Gosling now run a website called *Gay Monitor* which is partly a history of CHE and partly an account of more recent cases of discrimination against gay men.

Gosling's background in grass-roots activism chimed in with CHE's attempt to forge a democratic mass movement in which gay people were encouraged to take control of their own lives and fight for their rights, in contrast to much pre-1967 work by, in particular, the London-based [Homosexual Law Reform Society](#), seen as "top-down", metropolitan and somewhat elitist and not run by gay people themselves (or not ostensibly so: in fact, HLRS founder [A.E. Dyson](#) and long-time HLRS Secretary Antony Grey were/are both gay, but never said so at the time).

Thus, at a CHE rally in [Trafalgar Square](#), London, on 23 November 1975, Ray Gosling said: "Last time it was done by an elite, who did it by stealth ... This time it has to be done by us, brothers and sisters".

**The Sparrows' Nest** <http://thesparrowsnest.org.uk>