

## **LGBT History Month : Croydon 2010**

### **War Memorial Ceremony : Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2010**

**We are gathered here today in the shadows of many who would in every sense of the word, been surprised, startled and amazed, that today they are to be honoured in the presence of the Deputy Mayor of Croydon Cllr Russell Jackson and remembered and thanked for the sacrifices that they made during world war two.**

**We gather to honour them and to take this opportunity to commemorate the of life of a brave and courageous fighter pilot and prisoner of war who was born in Croydon at number 4 Sydenham Road, we remember Roberta Cowell with thanks and Pride.**

**Today we pay a special tribute to the role played by Alan Turing during WW2.**

**Alan was in every sense a Gay War Hero. Strangely, because:-  
He never fired a shot.**

**He didn't kill anyone.**

**He didn't blow anybody up.**

**Yet, this man saved thousands upon thousands of lives.**

**This epic achievement was made though the key role he played in breaking the enigma codes. It's now recognised that without this contribution to Britain's fight against the nazis, The history of world war two could have been very different.**

## 2.

**There would not be a Rainbow Flag flying today & LGBT History Month celebrations taking place, but the possibility of wearing the pink triangle and being shipped to a camp like Saxon Haus under the Swastika.**

**It's now acknowledged by the majority of military historians that the breaking of the enigma codes**

**saved a multitude of lives,    on the battlefield,**

**in our cities            and on the sea.**

**It's now known, that once the secret codes were cracked, convoys carrying food and essential supplies from North America could cross the Atlantic with German submarine attack against our merchant fleet much reduced.**

**Sadly for Alan and a great many like him from the LGBT communities after world war two. They were pursued, prosecuted and punished for being who they were. The part they had played during the war rewarded only with fear of arrest. It was in this climate of fear of being caught that in 1952 Alan Turing was arrested for loving and falling in love with men.**

**3.**

**He was arrested for what was a victimless crime, charged under the law of the day and found guilty.**

**He was sentenced and offered the choice of prison or chemical castration. He choose the latter and sadly committed suicide within two years.**

**Thankfully, in the UK after we can now be**

**‘Glad to be LGBT’**

**Therefore, let’s take this opportunity to remember, honour and commemorate the life and work of Alan Turing.**

**And also remember and commemorate the lives and sacrifices made by all members of the Lesbian, Gay, Bi & Trans communities who played their part during the second world war, and who like Alan were so badly treated by the society they had so loyally served.**

**In remembering our past, present war & peacetime heroes. Let’s not forget the LGBT communities worldwide, who continue to be persecuted and punished for who they are....**

**and to paraphrase Oscar Wilde:-**

***"Who dare not speak their name"***