

# Ray Gosling

19th November 2013

dead

We're here to celebrate the life of our great friend and inspiration – Ray.

Ray was many things to many people.

Thousands knew him as a friendly voice on the radio, talking to people without looking down on them. He travelled the length of the country, and abroad, meeting all kinds of people and producing award-winning programmes about them and the places they lived in. He covered subjects nobody else would touch.

On TV, he pioneered sharing views from the street, and presenting them to those in authority. He showed that he cared.

In Nottingham, he took up the cause of St. Ann's, "a wrong that had to be put right" he said, campaigning for the best old houses to be kept and improved rather than having everything swept away. He helped to set up St. Ann's Tenants and Residents' Association and brought together different ends of the political spectrum to set up services for the new estate.

For years he flitted between Nottingham, London and Manchester. He continued to write for leading magazines and newspapers, and published two books – his autobiography when he was 23, and a memoir of the 60s, about his time in Nottingham.

Quietly in the background, he worked for gay rights through the Campaign for Homosexual Equality, and supported gay men who had been discriminated against.

He became a tutor for the University of the Third Age, encouraging people to talk about their lives, and striding out at the front of guided tours which always seemed to end up at the pub.

St. Ann's was extended to include Ray's decadent house in Mapperley – full of books, paintings and an archive room with floor to ceiling files and newspapers. Presided over by Ray's partner Bryn, the house was home to a variety of tenants (many of whom didn't pay rent), friends and people in trouble. When he had money, Ray was generous with it.

The spirit of the house was transferred to Ray's final home, a sheltered flat in Colville Court, and he became a familiar figure around Mansfield Road. Wherever he went, to the end, Ray carried a little red notebook to jot down his observations.

Rest in peace, Ray.

