

*SPECIAL BIRTHDAY EDITION*

**N°25**

# GAY NEWS

**15p**

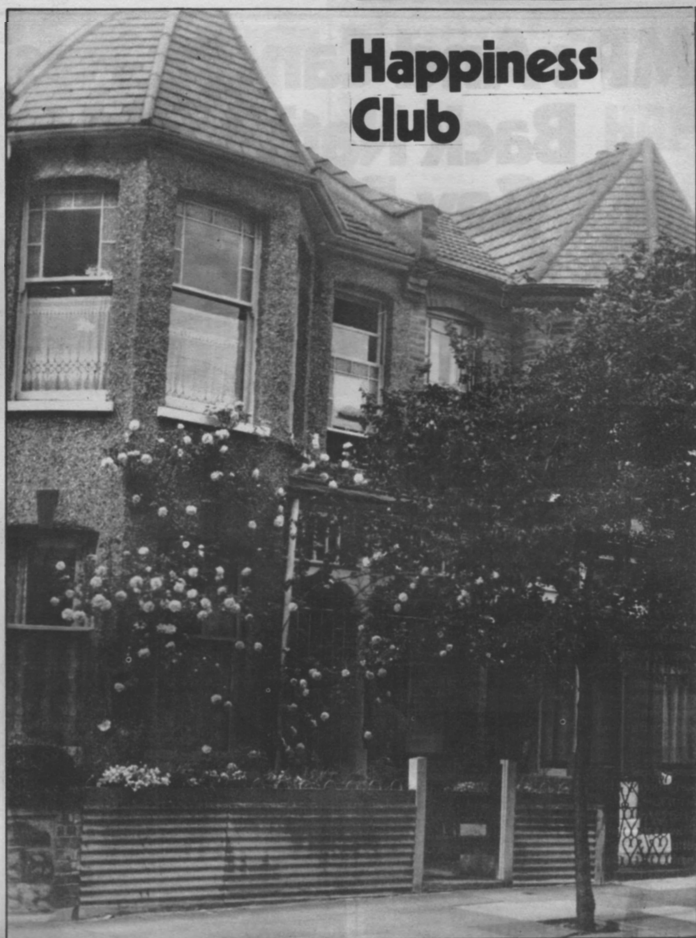
**Gayness: What The MP's Think**

**GN Exposes  
Happiness Club  
Racket**



EUROPE'S LARGEST CIRCULATION NEWSPAPER FOR GAYS OF ALL SEXES





The 'Happiness Club' suburban headquarters, 23 Arcadian Gardens, Wood Green, North London.



ONE of the best organised rackets to extort money from gays and non-gays around England has been operating for about three weeks, and sadly, it's working.

The racket, which goes under the misnomer of the year 'Happiness Club' sets its sights on the gay community when it attempts to operate an expensive contact club failed dismally.

When it was founded in 1971 by Dennis Stanbury, it was supposedly an organised way for people to meet other people with the same sexual desires . . . gay or non-gay.

It sounded like a reasonably legitimate club for kinky 'fun-lovers' to get together. It was nothing of the kind. It was a once-a-month sex contact magazine, with a few sex stories, and editorial suggestions about taking advantage of some publicised sex aids.

But Dennis Stanbury's plans to make the 'Happiness Club' a ringing success crashed towards the end of 1972 when membership was simply dropping off.

Coincidentally, that was the time when Gay News itself came onto the scene, offering a personal contact service. Hopefully we added to the much-needed demise of the Happiness Club.

But Dennis Stanbury refused to announce the death of his club and leave it at that. Within weeks of his financial situation becoming apparent, he made a full-faced demand on the members of the Happiness Club for funds. He explained to them in a circular that the club's debts amounted to £3,000, but that his 'publishing company' had taken care of that.

What he was demanding from what he called his 'Full Members' was £20.50. And it was a case of 'Pay Up Or Else'. He threatened in his phoney 'legal notice of liquidation' that the amount must be paid within 30 days.

LEGAL NOTICE OF LIQUIDATION  
THE HAPPINESS CLUB

March 31st, 1973.

Dear Member,

The bank has fallen to me, as promised to my last account, to inform you that the Happiness Club has been declared bankrupt and closed today. Since its liquidation is proceeding the settlement and claims of its members upon all Full (Class A) Members to honour such claims, the liability of each has now been assessed, your portion is £20.50, and this must be paid within the next 30 days.

The money should be sent to the Arcadian Recording Centre (at 23 Arcadian Gardens, London N22 6AG) who are the Official Receiver. This payment entitles you to a share of the Club's only assets, the residual stock of magazines, you will, upon request, be sent a complete set — 50 copies — of which you may dispose as you wish.

We regret that the expiry of too many Members has obliged our liquidators to act in this unhappy way.

*Conroy Walker*  
(Conroy Walker)  
Trustee Receiver

Since then, Dennis Stanbury has contacted several members and warned that if their 'share of the debts' wasn't met, the matter would be handed over to the debt collectors.

Don't Pay

The fact is, Dennis Stanbury has no right to make such a demand. No single member — unless they at any stage have signed a contract saying that they will pay this phantom sum of £20.50 — has any need to pay it. Every member of the Happiness Club to receive the demand need only ignore it.

It would seem that Dennis Stanbury stands to make a lot of money out of his laughable demands — if all his members were as stupid as he would seemingly assume they were.

Happiness Club

Friendship Bureau Threatens Gays

by Tim Skinner

The membership role carried numbers above 6,000, which either indicated a heavy membership, or thousands of non-existent members.

The operation of the Happiness Club involved the allocation of a 'personal sex number' to members. This number allegedly rated members' sexual preferences, whether they be men or women. It told, apparently, what sort of sex they liked, how often they liked it, and even the physical attributes of their ideal partners.

This personal sex number arrived at for each member was used to match partners for the gay/straight dating service run by the Happiness Club.

Apparently the operation of Dennis Stanbury's sex club shocked many of its members. One letter from a disgruntled member has already appeared in a national daily. It read: "I read about the Happiness Club in a newspaper advertisement. I didn't know it dealt with kinky sex. I joined because I wanted to find someone to marry and paid my £10.00. I was shocked when I read some of the adverts in the monthly magazine. Out of the blue I got a letter dated March 31, 1973, saying I must pay up £20.50 as my portion of the club's debts. On May 2, I got a final notice in red type, threatening me with a summons and a firm of debt collectors chasing me. I paid my year's membership and I'm not going to pay any more."

Gay Reaction

Gay News itself has had a lot of comments about the operation of the Happiness Club.

One reader wrote: "On Tuesday, I received a letter from the Happiness Club, explaining their demand for £20.50. They said that the amount was to cover the cost of the four magazines printed since the club became autonomous since the end of September, 1972.

"I should point out to you that a year's membership to the Happiness Club costs £10.00 which is five times the subscription

to SMG, from which they print their monthly newsletter and still have some left over.

"Someone, somewhere, had made a pile of money from the Happiness Club, but now they're getting greedy. This type of contact agency is being driven out of business by our own ad page, for which we are all grateful."

Another letter to Gay News said: "Dear GN: Last year I was lonely and foolish enough to join a gay/straight dating club called the Happiness Club. I paid £10.00 for a year's subscription. I have a receipt to verify this. Recently I received the enclosed demands for £20.50. I do not understand how I can be asked to fork out to pay the club's creditors. I have never signed anything to that effect. I would be grateful if you could help me in this matter if you are able. There may be a number of gays involved, and there's a chance you could save a bit of money by helping to expose these crooks."



James A. Conroy  
23 Arcadian Gardens,  
LONDON N22 6AG  
Phone 01 871 7445  
(Residence 1973)

Registration  
May 1st, 1973.

FINAL NOTICE  
to Debtors of The Happiness Club

Your urgent attention is drawn to the fact that the amount of your liability of £20.50 is now payable within a period of 7 days grace as being allowed for this to be paid, by law, you are entitled to under this by arrangements acceptable to the Receiver if your assets provide an acceptable guarantee. After the 7th of this month, the offer of magazines and any adjustments directed will become final, and no further accounts will be passed to an expert firm of Debt Collectors, subsequently, a Joint Credit Restriction will be sought against remaining debtors.

All those who were Full Members on Sept. 1st 1972 (when the Club became autonomous) or afterwards registered as such, and had not formally resigned by March 31st this year, are accountable. Liquid subscriptions are important and should be paid immediately upon receipt. Reference to Members' liability was made in the annual of issue 20 of the magazine.

If you have any doubts about the validity of this claim, you should consult your legal adviser without delay.

It would seem, though, that the 'crook' at the top doesn't care about the problems he's

causing, or just plain dumb.

Dennis Stanbury went on record two weeks ago when he told one national newspaper that he had full legal right on his side.

He said: "I know the official receiver is a Government-appointed official, but that doesn't mean anyone can't use the name.

"If I want to say we're in liquidation, that's my business."

Dennis Stanbury must realise that a lot of his business came from gay people. He must also realise that his foolish blunders and laughable demands for money must surely bring about his downfall.

To date, Gay News has been unable to speak with him. At the time of going to press he had neither answered phone calls nor been home when we called.

His 'headquarters' are his home, a be-flowered two-storey terrace at 23 Arcadian Gardens, Wood Green, North London. When I went to the house on Sunday with photographer Pascal Danot, Stanbury refused to answer the door. A window upstairs was opened while we rang the front door bell, but nobody came to the door.



Dennis Stanbury, a ruthless shark who preyed on lonely gays.

We waited for nearly one hour, and eventually left a letter asking him to contact our office.

Presumably, Dennis Stanbury is continuing his efforts to scare members of his sinking Happiness Club to hand out money in large lumps.

Hopefully, he is failing miserably.

Dennis Stanbury is a first class example of a ruthless shark, preying on the loneliness of people. Happily, the only immediate piece of advice to any Happiness Club members reading Gay News is to ignore his demands for money.

We would also be glad to hear from anyone who has received any further demands from Stanbury or any other 'official' of the Happiness Club.

FOOTNOTE: Gay News has never sunk its teeth into public scandals before. It is not our last attempt either.

Gay News is neither public watchdog nor gay saint . . . but we do have a growing responsibility to advise and warn on matters such as Dennis Stanbury's Happiness Club. And we've only just begun.

Photograph: Pascal Danot, Gayshot

Illustrations: Jean-Claude Thevenin

**THE biggest and most official survey of gay support and attitudes yet held in Britain has just concluded, and if its findings can be neatly summarised, they are on the credit side of being heartening.**

The survey — held with the total support of the Campaign for Homosexual Equality — was held over eight months. Its results are published exclusively in Europe in Gay News.

Unlike earlier surveys or reports on gay attitudes, this one was directed at Members of Parliament, and later, at election candidates, to sound out their potential reactions to possible gay movements.

The man who undertook the entire operation was Col John Gough . . .

The survey underlines the stark fact that throughout history, British homosexuals have been the least vocal of all national minorities. Neither the politician nor the voter has been overly bothered with the oppression of the homosexual community, as large as it is.

It's only been in the past few years that gays themselves have brought the issue before the British people, and it is for this reason that the survey has been so important.

For the first time, homosexuals have forced upon some sections of the British Government machine an awareness that gays are no longer willing to acquiesce to claims by the majority about 'gayness being immoral'.

To achieve the results which are openly revealed in this finding, the John Gough report adopted two tactics. First, a 'feeler' letter to Members of Parliament, introducing CHE and its objectives, and asking the members to state their views on specific policy matters of the campaign. The second part of the survey followed in April this year when an all-embracing questionnaire was sent to all candidates in Brighton and Hove for the 1973 County Council elections.

**Sleeper Results**

The results looked disappointing at first, with very few Members of Parliament making quick replies, but before long, the majority had both replied and given positive statements on homosexuality.

Of 13 Members contacted, eight replied. Three were more than helpful and potentially enthusiastic in their support for gay submissions; two were vaguely sympathetic but refused to express opinions, one was totally non-committal, and two made it clear that they were opposed to any form of gay support.

The Members contacted for the initial survey were Mr A Bowden MBE (Brighton, Kemp Town), the Rt Hon J Amery (Brighton Pavilion), Mr C J Chataway (Chichester), Sir C S Taylor (Eastbourne), Mr G Johnson-Smith (East Grinstead), Mr K Warren (Hastings), Mr P M Hordern (Horsham), Mr W F M Maddan (Hove), Sir T V Beamish (Lewes), Mr B G Irvine (Rye), Captain M B Kerby (Shoreham and Arundel), Mr T L Higgins (Worthing) and Mr Dennis Hobden (Brighton Council and ex-MP for Kemp Town).

Each member of Parliament was sent the standard introductory pamphlet which explained CHE, as well as a standard letter, which said:

"Dear Sir: The enclosed pamphlet introduces you to CHE, a national organisation which earlier this year formed a Brighton-based group. The latter branch has already doubled in numbers, and is rapidly expanding throughout Sussex.

One of our aims is to widen the understanding of Society about the problems of the homosexual. To this end, we have contacted a number of local organisations such as the Samaritans and Medical Services.

Our main object in writing to you is to draw your attention to the fact that, apart from our own members in your area, expert opinion indicates that on average, five per cent of your constituents are exclusively homosexual.

They would welcome your views on the following points, which we consider would go a long way towards the integration of this minority into the community:-

- (1) Legislation to reduce the age of consent for homosexual acts to the same as that for heterosexual acts.
- (2) Legislation to make the Sexual Offences Act (1967) applicable throughout the whole United Kingdom.
- (3) Legislation to make illegal discrimination against a person with respect to accommodation or employment on the grounds of his or her homosexuality.
- (4) Measures to make available at Secondary School level, sex education, which includes a fair summary of homosexual behaviour and affection.

You may be interested to know that at one of our forthcoming discussions, our Guest/Speaker is to be a well-known Anglican Bishop. We would be very pleased to welcome you as a guest at this meeting at 7.30 pm on Friday 15th December at the above address.

We look forward to your reply with interest."

Thus the first letters went out to the carefully selected Members of Parliament, and slowly, they came back to Col. Gough.

# MP's And Candidates Back National Gay Report



All the letters bore the official seal of the House of Commons, and the first came back on November 15 from Mr Peter Hordern MP, who acknowledged the original letter, ignored the specific questions, and explained that he was unable to attend the meeting because of a previous engagement.



Dennis Hobden MP will support reform which makes "our society a more humane society".

On November 18, a totally all-supporting letter came from former MP Dennis Hobden, who wrote:-

"Thank you for your letter. I have always supported any measure of reform which should make our society a more humane society particularly for minority groups. As a matter of interest when I was formerly the member for Kemp Town, I supported the 1967 Act when it was going through all its stages in the Commons. Dealing with your specific points you raise, I would undoubtedly support them, and would have no hesitation in making a public declaration to that end."

Mr Hobden also expressed a desire to attend the meeting.

**An Emphatic 'No'**

Sir Charles Taylor, TD, DL, MP, replied to the letter with one blunt blast:-  
"Thank you for your letter about the

From: MR CHARLES TAYLOR, T. D., DL, MP



Col J Gough,  
26 Broad Street,  
Kemp Town,  
Brighton

21st November 1972

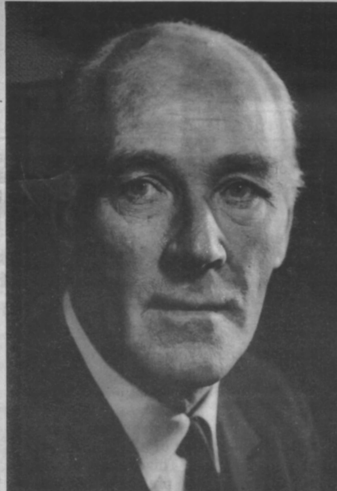
Dear Mr Gough,

Thank you for your letter about the campaign for homosexual equality. I want to have nothing to do with this at all and I cannot send my good wishes.

Yours sincerely,

*Charles Taylor*

campaign for homosexual equality. I want to have nothing to do with this at all, and I cannot send my good wishes."



Sir Charles Taylor MP apparently still holds reactionary views on homosexuality.

Mr Andrew Bowden, the present member for Kemp Town, seemed to share some of the optimism — perhaps a little guarded at the outset — of his predecessor. He began a series of letters to the campaign's source virtually apologising for not being able to attend the meeting, but asking to meet a delegation from CHE to discuss the four points in the initial letter.

From: ANDREW BOWDEN M.B.E. M.P. Kemp Town, Brighton



AB/30

14th December 1972

*Dear Col Gough,*

Thank you for your letter of the 3rd December 1972.

My wife very much hopes to be able to attend the meeting on Friday 15th December.

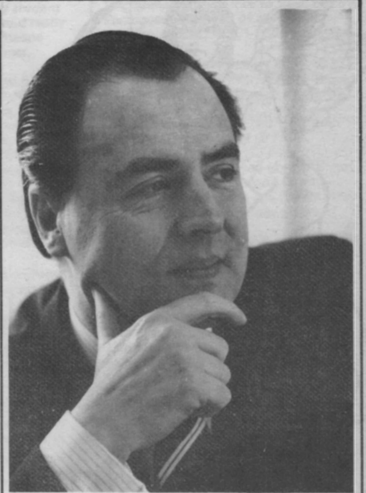
I am not having an Advice Service on Friday 15th January as I consider if it would be convenient for you and three members of your Committee to come to my Advice Service at about 5.30 p.m. on Friday 14th December 1973.

With best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

*Andrew Bowden*  
Andrew Bowden, M.B.E., M.P.

Colonel John Gough,  
9 Chapel House,  
26/7 Broad Street,  
Kemp Town,  
Brighton, BN2 1JZ.

P.S. My wife expects to attend the meeting on Friday.



Possible support from Andrew Bowden MP.

Mr Geoffrey Johnson-Smith MP explained his non-alliance this way:

"Thank you for your letter and enclosures. I voted for the Homosexual Reform Bill but I am afraid I am not now able to give consideration to the deep questions you have raised as I have Ministerial responsibilities. Perhaps as time goes by there will be more public debate which will enable me to come to some conclusions."



From: Geoffrey Johnson Smith MP

22nd November 1972

Dear Col. Gough

Thank you for your letter and enclosures.

I voted for the Homosexual Reform Bill but

I am afraid I am not now able to give consideration

to the deep questions you have raised as I

have Ministerial responsibilities.

Perhaps as time goes by there will be more

public debate, which will enable me to come

to some conclusions.

Yours sincerely

*G. Johnson-Smith*



Geoffrey Johnson Smith voted for the Homosexual Reform Bill.

It was a hot and cold, but openly honest reply from Mr Martin Maddan MP, who said:

"Thank you for your invitation to your meeting on 15 December, but I am not able to attend. I should also make clear that, while I have consistently voted in favour of the implementation of the Wolfenden Report in respect of male homosexuals, I do not support the four objects which you set out in your letter."

From: Martin Maddan MP



27 November 1972

Dear Colonel Gough,

Thank you for your invitation to your meeting on 15 December, but I am not able to attend.

I should also make clear that, while I have consistently voted in favour of the implementation of the Wolfenden Report in respect of male homosexuals,

I do not support the four objects which you set out in your letter.

Yours sincerely,

*Martin Maddan*  
Private Secretary  
Dictated by Martin Maddan  
but signed in his absence

It was a fair and open response from the RT Hon Christopher Chataway MP, who wrote:

"... I was for some years on the Executive of the Homosexual Law Reform Society and had the privilege of seconding the Bill which eventually passed into law. The chances of further legislation being acceptable to the Department in the near future are somewhat remote, and I would have doubts myself as to whether it would be right to reduce the age of consent as you advocate. As I remember it, the last implemented recommendations of the Wolfenden Committee on these seemed to me to be well argued. I should, however, be very willing to consider carefully any proposals which Members of Parliament sympathetic to your views may advance."



A fair and open response from Christopher Chataway MP.

Sadly, those 'Parliamentary sympathisers' were heavily outweighed by the non-supporters and the members who chose to ignore the letter.

Those who did not reply were the Rt Hon A Amery, K Warren, Sir T V Beamish B G Irvine and Captain M B Kerby.

**A Right To Refuse**

Of course there was no compulsion to reply, and indeed, being optimistic or just plain heartened by the response is fair comment, but it is interesting to note that the probable reason for a refusal to reply was apathy, or hopefully, expediency.

A lengthy pause in the until-then almost negative survey followed, but no new replies came in. At the end of March this year, Mr Gough launched another survey, this time aimed at every candidate in Brighton and Hove in the County Council election.

Again it began with a lengthy but all-explaining letter which said:

"I am writing on behalf of the local group of CHE which covers the county of Sussex. As you know, expert opinion has estimated that at least five percent of the population is exclusively homosexual. The Brighton group was formed almost a year ago with favourable publicity in the local press. We hope that if you are elected a member of the County Council, you will be able to help us and any homosexual residents of your district in any instances of discrimination which occurs. In the enclosed questionnaire we list the sort of instances where we would like to be able to look to you for support. Furthermore, we seek an assurance of principle, since CHE has unfortunately come up against several instances of explicit dis-

crimination by local authorities on grounds of homosexuality.

"This was in 1971 when a number of local people tried to open a club for homosexuals in Burnley, the council went so far as to ask the Association of Municipal Associations to seek powers from Parliament to allow local authorities to use planning powers against such clubs (happily the AMC refused). More recently, the CHE National Conference was refused Corporation facilities by Morecambe and Heysham Council on totally spurious grounds after it had initially been invited and booked by the town's publicity office. Hence our first question which we hope you will be able to answer in the affirmative.

"We look forward to an early reply and hope you will have no objection to our publicising your response so that the electorate knows where you stand. If you prefer to answer by letter rather than fill in the attached questionnaire, please do so..."

The following questionnaire was subsequently posted to all candidates. It asked:

1. If you are elected a Councillor, will you undertake to oppose any attempt to discriminate against any person, group of persons or organisation on the grounds of their homosexuality or views about homosexuality?
2. If you are elected a Councillor, would you be prepared to help the residents of Brighton in the following ways:
  - (a) Aiding homosexual groups to find places for private meetings or clubs, where anyone tries to prevent this.
  - (b) Taking up alleged instances of police harassment of homosexuals;
  - (c) Supporting the local CHE group's rights to put out leaflets in public places;
  - (d) Approaching any local newspaper which refuses advertisements from homosexual groups;
  - (e) Taking up alleged instances of discrimination against homosexuals in employment etc;
  - (f) Supporting the proposal that local schools' sixth forms should invite a speaker on homosexuality."

The printed questionnaires and introductory letters were sent to every candidate. Replies came from Mr D H Hobden (Falmer) Mr Paul Mellins (Brighton and Hove) Mr Don Ranger (Hanover), Mr J Leach (Pier), Mr F E Spicer (Pavilion), Mr R J Blackwood (Stanmer) Mr F Tonks (St Peters), Mr Tony Clifton (Montpelier) and Mr Logan (Brighton). Seven were totally in favour of backing the aims of the questionnaire, one was hesitant and one was returned unanswered. Interestingly enough, it was J Leach (Pier) who returned his without comment and with no answer. Ironically, he was defeated by a comparative newcomer (Labour).

Mr F E Spicer (Pavilion) returned his completed questionnaire, and along with it a letter thus:

"I refer to your questionnaire. The Labour Party is against minority discrimination. I would not seek to give special support to a minority group. I would regard myself free to judge any case on its merits. I regarded the Homosexual Law Reform Bill as a useful legislative measure."

In the case of the other replies, here's a breakdown of their reaction.

On question 1, the following men stated that they would oppose any attempt to discriminate: D H Hobden, Tony Clifton, F Tonks, Don Ranger, Paul Mellins, and Mr Logan.

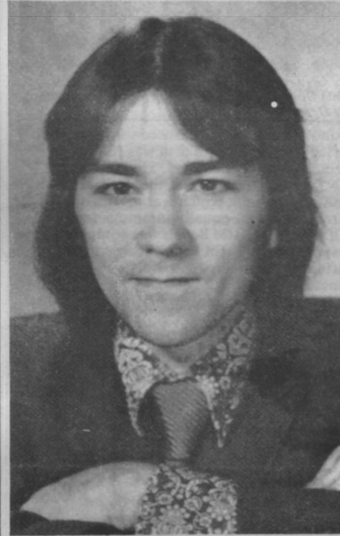
Without exception, every candidate agreed to give total support to section 2, parts (a) to (e), and only one candidate said he would not help in supporting the proposal that local schools' sixth forms should invite a speaker on homosexuality. Mr F Tonks, who gave no reason for not supporting the

school move was not elected. He polled 892 against the Conservative candidate (G Theobald) who polled 1,029.

Giving voice to his total support, Mr D H Hobden (Falmer Ward) said: "You may be interested to know that Cr Brown (Queens Park Ward) and I were the only two councillors on the Entertainment and Publicity Committee to support recently a conference by homosexuals to be held in Brighton next year. The proposition was opposed by leading hoteliers. Not a word has appeared in the local press."

Fittingly enough, Mr Hobden won the election with a fat majority of 1,577 to his Conservative (A Baldry) opponent's tally of 433.

Tony Clifton (Montpelier Ward) suffered a defeat (488 votes) to G A Burton (Con) who won 807 votes, but the Labour candidate wrote his definite views about the CHE survey:



Tony Clifton will fight for the 'underdog' in society.

"... may I draw your organisation's attention to paragraph four of the enclosed election address which states clearly my personal position... 'As a Socialist, I am always on the side of the under-dog, and I am a fighter. I think that is what is needed.' You will recall that it was the last Labour Government who introduced long awaited legislation to legalise homosexuality..."

Mr Don Ranger (Hanover) who polled a victorious 1,384 votes over his Conservative opponent Ms Butterworth (648) said:

"... As the Labour/Co-operative Candidate for Hanover Ward, I would oppose any discrimination and would be pleased to support your campaign. You will know that as far as the Corporation Hall is concerned, we have now given practical expression to this..."

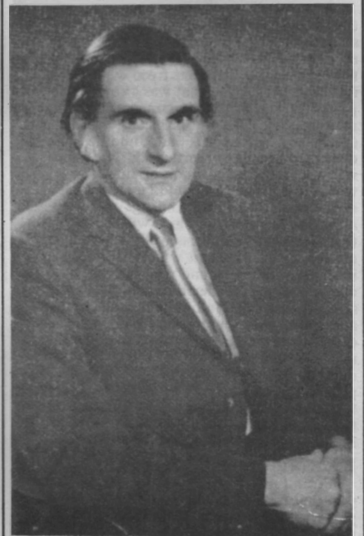
Mr R Logan (Ind Goldsmid) was defeated with 401 votes by A L H White (Con, 1,732) but his reply states "... After April 12, I will, if you choose, try to give a more helpful reply. My concern is mainly environment..."

Mr Paul Mellins (Montpelier) polled 461 and went under to G A Burton's 807 for the Conservatives, but fought on to back the CHE log of claims. With his 100% in favour reply came: "... I entirely agree with your aims, and do believe the work you are doing in questioning election candidates is an important one..."

It would be too glib — perhaps too mathematical to equate the results of the survey in

terms of figures. That would not show any sort of a victory. In a way, it's still impossible to wave a gay flag aloft and claim a great deal. What is important though, is that so many MP's and candidates took the time and trouble, and in some cases, devotion, to reply at length.

There's another indication that the efforts of John Gough and CHE were not in vain. A lot of the responses came from the candidates running in large urban centres, and assuming that gay liberation or understanding is strongest in these areas, it suggests something more than a breakthrough.



Don Ranger opposes discrimination and will support gay campaigns for equality.

And there's one all-important pulsating factor.

The politicians and the ones who hope they'll become politicians are at least aware that a very large slice of their constituency is gay. They know that can't be changed.

And now, perhaps for the first time, that gay five percent is getting equal treatment in choosing its candidate, and its candidate, in most cases, is thinking about that five percent as a very ordinary yet very important part of the constituency.

Tim Skinner

ED: Photographs of Andrew Bowden MP and Christopher Chataway MP by Tom Blau, Camera Press London; photograph of Dennis Hobden MP by Camera Press London; photograph of Sir Charles Taylor by Godfrey Argent, Camera Press London; photograph of Geoffrey Johnson Smith by Peter Mitchell, Camera Press London; and photograph of Houses of Parliament by Pascal Danot, Gayshot.

\*\*\*\*\*  
 All gay women  
 should read  
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 regular monthly  
 magazine  
 BCM Petrel London WC1  
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**North London's Only Gay Night Club**

**SHANE'S**

1 BROADHURST GARDENS LONDON NW6

(Finchley Road, behind John Barnes)

TELEPHONE : 01-624 9838

Featuring Two Bars and Lively Discotheque

Friendly Atmosphere

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a superb french restaurant . . . near marble arch . . .



**le faune**

23 praed street london w.2  
 (01) 723 5170

last orders 11:30 pm

AS I was the co-founder of Gay News and am now the only member left of the original team that brought out the first edition of the paper, it has fallen on my shoulders to write about our first year of publishing and what we expect to be happening in our second year of existence. It is impossible to write such a piece without many of my own personal convictions and ideals being aired, although I believe that the majority of my opinions are shared by the rest of the GN staff.

### A Means of Communication For All Gays

Forgetting the many pie-in-the-sky attitudes and what would have proved to be somewhat destructive ideologies if we had rigidly stuck to them, Gay News hasn't turned out very different from what it was intended to be. And that was a fortnightly periodical that primarily concentrated on relating 'gay' news and information, with a fair measure of articles that could be loosely described as being entertaining. The paper was not to be just London orientated, which it isn't, and it would be independent of the political and reformist gay movements, although naturally we agree with some of their plans and enthusiastically support any constructive campaigns which will result in bringing about legal and parliamentary changes for our readership. We felt, as we still do, that the homophile organisations and fronts only represent a small percentage of homosexuals and that an unaffiliated medium such as GN could create a means of communication for a considerably larger proportion of gay men and women. Accepting the still obvious limitations of GN, we think that we have succeeded in realising this objective.

### Lesbians

From the very first issue of GN, we told you that our policy was to provide a newspaper for both gay men and lesbians. I purposely use the word 'lesbian' for a specific reason. I find that most people, especially heterosexuals, immediately jump to the conclusion that I am just talking about men when I use the term 'gay' and 'homosexual'. Unbelievable as it may seem, people find it hard to accept that, in any society, there are at least as many lesbians as there are gay men. Such ignorance and misinformed reasoning is yet another form of oppression lesbians have to bear, in addition to the discrimination all women generally experience and the social stigmas attached to any individual, male or female, who doesn't conform to an illogically stereotyped sexuality. Subsequently, I consider it important to endeavour to break down this particular myth that besets 'gay' women and from now on will say 'lesbian' whenever I want to make it quite clear I'm not just talking about gay men.

Although the last paragraph may not seem to have much to do with GN's progress over the last year, it is necessary to remember that the paper's major failure has been its lack of news and feature material specifically for lesbians. I believe 'male dominated' is the phrase more radical gays would use to describe GN. We are read by a growing number of women, but in comparison with the male readership, the amount who can relate to the paper is extremely small. A large proportion of the blame is ours and as excuses don't solve problems, it is up to us to try even harder to rectify the situation. One hopeful sign, which I hope won't be interpreted as a piece of blatant male chauvinism, is that recent editions have contained more editorial content about lesbians than any of our earlier editions.

One solution we unanimously reject, which you must be tired of hearing about, is the idea of having a 'women's page'. As a sister said in a letter that was published in GN23, "I don't want a 'women's page'. If women are to be equal, they shouldn't need special pages."

If any male readers are especially anxious to find out what is happening to lesbians in the UK at present, I suggest they subscribe to Sappho, which at last count had only one subscription taken out by a man.

### Growing Up

It is unnecessary for me to chronologically chart what's been published in GN, as elsewhere in this issue, Tim Skinner comments on the past 24 editions of the paper, in a piece he fondly refers to as 'Gay News' Greatest Hits'. But whilst Tim looks at each individual issue, I feel a few lines can be written about the way GN has grown up since the first issue hit the newsstands or your doormat, with a green Jimmy Saville peering out from underneath a broken egg. Our original logo was supposed to represent 'coming out from the shell of discrimination'.

I can't help but have an affection for our early editions. They often make me wince when looking through them, their embarrassing naivety is only matched by the honesty and joyful enthusiasm that went into producing them. In my opinion, GN8 was the first indication that we were changing from being undisciplined amateurs and attempting to become a degree more professional. That edition looked like a newspaper and set the standard for the next few

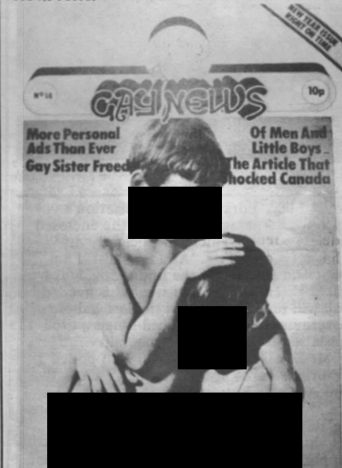
# The First Year

By Denis Lemon



The GN team in Hyde Park, June 1972. (Left to right) Doug Pollard, David Seligman, Jean-Claude and Denis.

issues. The cover that caused us to receive a virtual torrent of criticism was the one that depicted 'two little boys'. The notorious GN14. I must admit that the decision to use that photograph, which was meant to attract attention to our equally infamous feature 'Of Men and Little Boys', was completely my responsibility. I still hadn't learned the difference between controversy and sensationalism. I suppose gays do owe it to themselves to take care when so many hats have a generalised, too frequently ignorant image of us as one particular thing, whether it be pederast, effeminate or all the other stock roles.



The next turning point came with No 16, which we considered at the time had the best cover in GN's short history, and with issues 17 and 18 we solidified our intention of tightening up the direction the paper was taking. The results were seen with GN 19, which is still one of my personal favourites. About that time Tim Skinner joined us and from No 20 the paper took a leap forward in style and the quality, all largely due to the experience and terrific energy Tim brought with him. Since then we have tried to improve with each issue.

### Internals

During GN's first year, the people producing the paper came and went. We can but gratefully thank those individuals who placed commitment and a belief in something that could be valuable to all gay people, above financial rewards or their own ideological convictions, by contributing so much to the growth of the paper. Of course there were often heated rows and disagreements, most of which couldn't have been avoided, but at least they cleared the air, allowing people to voice their differences and then get back to the task of getting together the next edition. There were a few unpleasant incidents which are best forgotten, but one can never stop learning about the complexities and diversities of human nature.

The most important lesson we learned was that while the occasional row could be beneficial, especially when people made up and got on better than before, endless bickering, paranoid illusions and hard-headed personality clashes were utterly negative. We discovered that the hard way and now try to prevent such occurrences from arising, as the damage they cause can be disastrous. Hopefully the gay organisations will get the message when we advise them to stop their internal wranglings and also attempt to work together more effectively with other homophile groups and movements.

### The Collective

It took some time to finally realise that a collective was not the way to run a news-

paper. We ignored all the advice that such a system wouldn't work, but it wasn't until the beginning of the year it became apparent that the collective ideology was becoming increasingly anti-productive and editorially unsound. Since then we have evolved the basic running of the paper into various departments, each responsible for the different aspects of keeping GN in production.

What goes into an edition is the direct responsibility of the editor and the news editor, who of course liaise with the other people solely involved with the editorial side of the paper, eg the design editor. The business side is handled by a combined advertising and circulation manager, whilst the accounts are taken care of by the office manager, who in turn makes sure everything else is operating smoothly, eg subscriptions. All major decisions and important editorial policies are decided upon by meetings of the various heads of departments, but the editor has the final say on what is included in an issue of GN.

Although it may look rather complicated on paper, it really works. Gay News has never been as efficiently run as it is at present. Perhaps, for the first time, everyone knows exactly what they and everybody else should be doing and what is expected of them.

### Finding The Right Balance

On of the greatest difficulties in producing GN has been in trying to find the right balance that will appeal to as large a cross-section of gays as possible. Homosexuals are in all walks of life, and, like anyone else, no one gay thinks quite the same as another. Subsequently, we have had to try and please not just both sexes, but all sexualities that come under the heading GAY; all age groups and all manner of people with varying opinions about what they individually would like to see in a gay newspaper.

Our solution is, after the news section, to include as wide a variety of subjects and topics as is available, I know we disappoint some readers occasionally but while we are still limited to 20 pages, it is impossible to please all of you all of the time. If everything goes well when our 'major' distributor starts supplying GN to a larger number of outlets, we will then be able to increase the number of pages to 24. Until then, if we are continuously not covering a subject you think would interest many readers, send us letters till we do something about it.

### A Bright-Eyed Look At The Future

Our immediate task is to make sure that Gay News keeps on publishing, but we can't help but have a few other plans and ideas about what else we would like to achieve. Our mail order service has been a success and hopefully when we finally find premises to hold regular discos, and maybe even dances, they will prove to be welcome additions to the limited social outlets gay people have at the moment. Ideally we would like to open a social centre, but that ambition will have to wait at least a year before we can seriously consider opening one. Personally, I think there is also a need for an entertaining, well produced monthly magazine, that doesn't have to rely on pin-ups for sales. If someone doesn't get one together soon, next year may see me spending some time exploring the possibilities.

### So, What's Changed?

On a more serious level, it is fairly obvious from reading through the pages of the current issue of GN that the position of gay people in society hasn't changed a great deal over the last year. Homosexuals are still discriminated against, harassed, murdered, slandered, terrorised and generally abused by all and sundry. Agent provocateur methods are 'allegedly' widely used by the police throughout Great Britain and magistrates 'allegedly' allow their personal prejudices to interfere with their judgements. Gays of all sexes are still isolated and lonely, they are driven to despair and suicide, and gay women still have twice as much hostility to face as any male homosexual. Sex education, and not just about gayness, is primitive and unimaginative, and people continuously use religion to oppress those not of like mind.

And what's Gay News done about it? Not very much. But we have told a lot of people they are not alone in their struggle for equality and there are encouraging signs that significant changes are likely to happen in this decade. Gay people are no longer content to just accept being second class citizens and are realising they must make themselves responsible for their own destinies. But it isn't just heterosexuals who put a block on gays being integrated into the rest of society. Gays must accept that they have got a lot to learn too, if ever the myths about homosexuality are going to be exploded.

### Thanks To You

Before I finish, the rest of the GN combine and I would like to thank all the people who have helped and encouraged us over the last year. And without our readership support there would be no paper to write this piece for. The last year has been one of the most exciting, rewarding and frustrating periods in my life, and I look forward to being part of the team that brings you another year of Gay News.

THE MAGIC PENCIL  
WISHES GAYNEWS A  
HAPPY BIRTHDAY & GOOD  
LUCK IN THE FUTURE

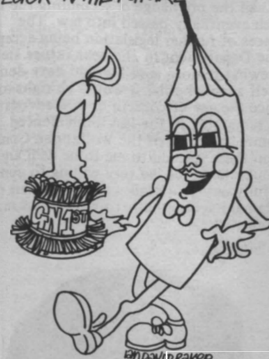


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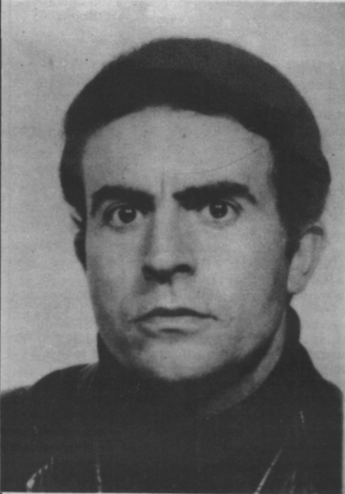
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TRADE ENQUIRIES WELCOME

## Mystery Death Still Baffles The Police



Did you see 'Paco' Alvarez between 7.30pm and 2.30am on Christmas Eve last year?

IF the name Francisco Alvarez Acedo means anything to you, you could hold the key to a death that has police in London baffled.

The case of 'Paco' Alvarez, as he was known to his friends, was widely publicised again on June 3 on television, (a 'Police 5' special), and since then, Gay News has offered to help the police in any way possible to discover why and how he died.

37-year-old Alvarez was found strangled to death in a room in Collingham Place, London SW5, on December 24 (Christmas Eve) last year. He was in a room owned by a young Spanish friend, Juan Carlos Sanchez. He was alone. There were bruises on his throat, and the pockets in a coat he'd been wearing were turned out. There was no visible sign of violence.

Was it death by accident, by suicide, or did the police have a murder case on their hands? They still don't know, and hopefully, Gay News can help.

Detective Chief Inspector Bob Tapp of the Kensington police told me this week that the prime task was to find anybody who saw Alvarez just before he died.

As it stands now, the last people to see him were Sanchez, in whose room he was found dead, and Sanchez's girlfriend.

What police do know is that Alvarez was with Sanchez and his girlfriend until 7.30pm

on Saturday December 24. He had spent some time in the flat during the day.

At 2.30am on Sunday — an official police estimate — he was dead — back in the Sanchez room. At that stage, Sanchez was working at a night club. He'd arranged to meet Alvarez at the club at 3am Sunday. Alvarez never made it.

So the crucial hours were between 7.30pm Saturday and 2.30am Sunday. Only eight hours, which decided his death.

There are suggestions that when he left the house in Collingham Place — only a few doors from the West London Air Terminal, he travelled by underground possibly from Gloucester Road station. He had allegedly been seen around that area often.

He may have been to the concourse at Victoria mainline station. He had been seen there before. He may also have been in the concourse at Piccadilly Circus underground — a place where he'd also been sighted often.

Police do not know whether he saw anybody, met anybody, or went home with anybody. He was presumably wearing a cape with gilt neck decorations during those eight crucial hours, so it is inconceivable that nobody saw him.

He was also wearing a black leather jacket. He was short, slightly-built, with dark hair.

Did he go home alone, and how did he get home? Did he even go home, or did he go straight back to his young Spanish friend's flat in London SW5?

They all remain, for the moment, unanswered.

There is one other vital clue, but police have for the moment run aground in their search for it. It's a search for a youngish Scottish man called John. No surname . . . just John, or 'Scottish John'. He was seen with Alvarez two days before he died in the West End actor's pub, The Salisbury, and police think he might be able to throw some light onto the mystery.

But 'Scottish John' has vanished. Possibly back to Scotland, but police have no evidence to support that theory.

Gay News' next issue will feature a complete rundown on the Alvarez story, and if possible, we will re-enact the last times Alvarez was seen in public.

In the meantime, if you think you have any information as to the mystery of the death of Alvarez, you can either contact the Kensington Police, or go through Gay News. We will pass any information on to Det Chief Inspector Tapp.

He assured me that any information, vital or otherwise, would be treated in the utmost confidence.

Tim Skinner

## A Statement From Centre

CENTRE,  
Broadley Terrace,  
London NW1.

CENTRE, as from June 1st 1973, has been solely concerned with Community Care and Counselling. We have severed all physical relations with homophile organisations, but are, nevertheless, continuing to counsel and befriend homosexuals whether or not they belong to a homophile movement or have been referred to us by a homophile movement.

It is with some regret that CENTRE has had to break with the 'Friend' organisation. During the past few weeks several speculations have arisen amongst various people over the reasons. It should be said at the outset that it was not entirely due to a clash of personalities but a practical problem of management and finance.

In March 1973 the organisers of 'Friend', both national and local, met to discuss the fusion of 'Friend' and the Albany Society, the latter being a company with charitable status. The outcome would have meant a split from CHE and the replacement of the Board of Directors of the Albany Society with 'Friend' organisers and counsellors. The meeting realised that this latter course would not be an easy task.

After a meeting between a few of the 'Friend' personnel and the Albany Society directors, CENTRE decided to split from 'Friend'. CENTRE regards the most important aspect of its work as the counselling and befriending of people. At the meeting it was suggested that each client would be charged £1.50 to discuss their problem with a counsellor. The counsellor used by 'Friend' London would be employed and selected by the Albany Society and 'Friend' would be used as a befriending service, and that homosexual counselling would only constitute 20% of the counselling work of the Albany Society.

It was these proposals that CENTRE directors found totally unacceptable. The hard work that the counsellors had done over the past year was not going to be jeopardised by political manoeuvring. They gave their services voluntarily

and kept the closest liaison with befrienders. What had started as a two night a week service has expanded into a five night counselling service, with awareness groups for men. Over the period of a year we have seen more clients than the whole of the CHE membership in London.

The Directors, Counsellors and many of the Befrienders have felt they will not be dictated to and bargained over by a handful of individuals most of whom have no experience of homosexual counselling.

Since the break, contrary to speculation and rumours circulated by many bitter individuals, CENTRE is continuing and expanding its homosexual counselling and befriending service. It is now operating men's and women's awareness groups, a disco on Friday evenings for any gay person, male or female, who feels he or she would like an atmosphere which is warm and friendly. It is hoped to create a group for homosexual alcoholics, student and youth work, the latter having the benefit of Ms Rose Robertson and her 'Parent Enquiry'. She has a wealth of experience in this field and will be using the premises on Thursday evenings. Legal problems will also be dealt with.

We conclude by saying that CENTRE has, throughout its existence, placed the welfare of its clients first. There are over two million homosexuals in this country most of whom will have a problem at some time during their lives. By being an impartial charitable body we hope to reach more people without prejudice, and we are convinced that the interest and welfare of people are your concern also.

PERSONNEL OF CENTRE

## Faces Behind The Names

THE occasion of our first birthday seemed as good an excuse as any for splurging our smiling faces all over the front cover. If you're interested, the people in the picture are back row (left to right): Jean-Claude Thevenin, Denis Lemon, Sandi Rutenberg, Stephen MacLean and Mike Nightingale, front row (left to right): Michael Mason, Pascal Danot and Peter Mundy.

If you see any of these faces in a pub looking tired, broke and thirsty . . .

## Transsexual Mystery Clarified

OPEN DOOR / Put together by the Transsexual Liberation Group / Community Unit Programme, BBC2, June 4.

VIEWERS who saw this programme must surely agree that the BBC deserve a vote of faith for giving a group of transsexuals the opportunity to show that they are not bats from Transylvania, but merely every-day people whose condition is neither horrifying nor particularly extraordinary.

Transsexual Della Alexandra held the discussion together with commendable good sense. Her overall approach was laudable — even though the immediate problems transsexuals must face were of immediate and personal concern, she placed strong emphasis on the view that the public must be made aware that all sexuality is of a polymorphous nature. Rather than exclusively concerning herself with transsexualism, hers was the task of encouraging viewers towards complete self-realisation of their own sexuality.

There are, however, more immediate problems to be faced. Firstly, a marriage involving a transsexual partner can be annulled if the husband chooses to announce to a court that his wife was once a male, even if he knew this fact prior to marriage. And although marriage with a transsexual partner is legal, it is not "lawful".

Laura, one of the women present described her wedding:

"We got married at St Pancras Town Hall, darling."

Was a birth certificate asked for?

"No darling, I was terrified they would. I was waiting for someone to tap me on the shoulder and say 'It's Holloway for you, dear.' Legally, the marriage does not exist, although it's been of great psychological benefit."

As well as legal problems, a lack of medical understanding was also bemoaned. The word 'transsexual' came into being in 1956 via a Dr Benjamin. A three month delay is required for transsexuals wishing to have the operation on national health. "It's like living on the edge of a volcano," said Jan, a blonde, the only one present who claimed to have once been gay (gays rejected her because she was too effeminate). Rachel, who had two children in her care from a marriage to a woman, said her pre-operation personality went through changes that were disturbing.

The period of waiting was particularly precarious for those who needed to work. To have an insurance card one must produce a birth certificate, often causing embarrassment.

Leo Abse, MP, and Dr Schlicht, a medical and psychological expert, appeared during the final portion of the 50 minute programme. Dr Schlicht countered that the delay was necessary for psychiatrists to observe their patients and decide whether or not the operation would be beneficial. "There are many who would not benefit from such an operation," he said, "such as feminine homosexuals, or drag queens who revel in their maleness."

The women, however, seemed in general agreement that the psychiatrist should be better informed and "have the courage of his convictions".

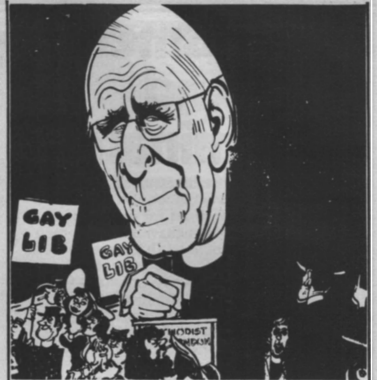
The psychiatrist and Leo Abse disputed some of the phraseology earlier used by the transsexual women ('intersexual' etc), but expressed hope that the public would employ "understanding" and "tolerance" on transsexuals wishing to live as normal wives. This is rather saddening: if Della Alexandra's hopes became reality, people would not need to put themselves in the seat of judgement, because they would accept all sexuality as fact, not merely a peccadillo open to moral judgement.

"Our femaleness is a fact, not a choice," she said. In conclusion: "It must be realised that we are just the top of the iceberg of human sexuality. Both sexes pulsate towards the middle, and the sex act itself could be interpreted as an attempt to become and absorb the beloved."

Whatever the effect the show may or may not have on legal and medical judgements, the good of it was that several transsexuals were on view to the public, talking from their perspective. Della Alexandra and associates deserve full marks for the sustained common sense they presented — as do the BBC for putting this show to air.

Stephen MacLean

ED: In the next issue of GN we will run John Gough's feature on transsexualism, followed by an exploration of hermaphroditism and transvestitism in issues 28 and 30.



## Gays 'Non-Creative' But Almost Acceptable

FOLLOWING closely on the furor within the Church of England over the Archbishop of York's view that many Anglican clergy are gay, we now have on record the attitudes of Lord Soper, a senior ex-President of the Methodist Church. In an interview with Peter Storey, a Roman Catholic priest, in *The Spectator*, Lord Soper adopts a mostly sympathetic stance, but would clearly be happier if he thought there were some therapeutic 'cure' to homosexuality. He also

throws a challenge to Methodist ministers to take part in discussions with gay groups.

To what extent Lord Soper has come into contact with homosexual life is uncertain. It seems his experience has been gained mostly through prison work. And two of his remarks make one wonder whether he is fully aware of the nature of gay relations: ". . . I was one of the chaplains at Pentonville Prison and was thrown into contact with a great many homosexuals there. I had the quite scarring experience of seeing a man immediately after he'd been birched and found that he enjoyed it — he wasn't just homosexual, he was also what is called perverted in other ways". Well, maybe. But what makes Lord Soper say he wasn't just homosexual; why does he, on recalling his memories of homosexual conduct, immediately alight upon what is obviously masochistic behaviour, about which most gay people would be as "scarified" as Lord Soper. Later in the interview, he again throws doubt on his personal knowledge of gay behaviour: ". . . I am perfectly satisfied that it is no more wrong for a couple of men to hold hands as an expression of affection than it is for a fellow to hold hands with his girl . . ." Gee, thanks, but holding hands can get a bit boring. On asking himself how far "that sexual process" can be justified, Lord Soper becomes rather confused. A relationship, he says, may well be permissible between two "definitely homosexual" people, but it depends on the environment, on the degree of commitment, and on whether it is what he calls "sacramental".

What chiefly seems to worry him is that a homosexual relationship is "non-creative". He makes this point twice: ". . . The sexual act between heterosexuals is an act with a creative element in it: the homosexual act is uncreative and is therefore to be deplored because it strikes against the whole concept of life as being a creative experience." and again ". . . There is no doubt that heterosexuality is creative in the simplest sense of that word, and therefore homosexuality is an abnormality. For that reason I think it would be in their interests to try to get cured, but you can't expect them at the stage at which they are homosexuals necessarily to agree with you. That is why I should have thought that the most productive therapy is that which can begin with the child — if possible — rather than attempt to change the adult."

To be fair, he does admit the social pressures against gay people: ". . . I would firmly agree with anyone who wanted to say that homosexuals have a raw deal . . ." and later: ". . . We shall have a right to expect a more responsible attitude from homosexuals when we treat them better. I think we've got to be much more tolerant of them, in the sense that we've got to recognise that they are human beings."

He goes on to say that he would like to see a more determined effort to break through the barriers of suspicion and embarrassment. "I wonder how many Methodist parsons at the moment would address or take part in conversations with homosexual groups?" he asks. "Now I think it would be a very good thing if they did."

The most startling revelation of the interview is an anecdote about John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist Church. *Did you* know that Wesley "ended up marrying a thoroughly undesirable widow and flirted around with all sorts of young girls on the back of his horse and talked to them in Greek" Now that's something to bring up the next time someone starts quoting old-fashioned Methodism at you.

Brian Kerr

# Harassment And Discrimination

THE increased police harassment of gays over the past few weeks, coupled with the rash of recent convictions for obstruction, cottaging, threatening behaviour etc, throws into even sharper focus (if that were possible) the question of whether the present law relating to public indecency and cognate activities is being fairly administered or whether there is, in fact, *prima facie* evidence of anti-gay discrimination on the part of police and the courts. Many innocent gays have been induced by the police to plead guilty, little realising that a criminal conviction can have the most awesome spin-offs (eg ban on entry to the USA).

If, in the face of mounting evidence, one still subscribes to the myth of judicial impartiality, how does one explain the staggering disparity in court penalties within a single metropolitan area? Why, in the past month alone, should one gay have been fined £10 and another £100 for the same cottaging offence when both incidents occurred in different parts of the same town (London) and when both defendants were first offenders with comparable incomes?



Photograph: David Hart

Pending new sexual legislation, we have little option but to live as best we can within the sow's ear of the existing law — but that does not mean that we need lie down any more under its *abuse* and allow the brute further licence to flail us with its prissy porcine hooves.

There are various blankets that can be thrown *now* on this sorry bed of nails. We can:

1. Inform homosexuals of their rights in the event of arrest, and provide immediate legal advice on a nationwide basis;
2. Collect and supply factual information concerning suspected cases of anti-gay discrimination by the courts and police.

Cases of discrimination are notoriously difficult to prove, but once it is seen that we have a case, the way should be clear to open a dialogue with the police at chief constable level and enlist their co-operation. A further, and parallel aim would be the achievement of some measure of uniformity in sentencing criteria.

It was to further these objectives that CHE recently set up the Legal Standing Committee, which is currently establishing a national contact network through local CHE groups.

Without your help we are, of course, powerless to act. If, therefore, you know of any instances of suspected anti-gay discrimination, or if you would like to support the Committee in its work, please contact either myself or our Chairman, Mike Barnes, at CHE National Office, 28 Kennedy Street, Manchester M2 4BG.

Bob Sturgess

## Newsletters

### Good News?

CARDIFF: The scrapping of laws based on Christian ethics — such as those governing divorce, abortion and homosexuality — will eventually lead to the death of the parliamentary democracy in Britain, Archbishop Murphy prophesied whilst addressing Civic Leaders here.

### California, Here I Come . . .

MISSOURI: "There will be a constant pressure to be recognised", said a Mr Webster, worried about the rise of Gay Lib whilst allotting State Budget to Columbia University. "We will not subsidise sodomy. We would like to send all the queers to California."

### The Cobweb To Close

EDINBURGH: The Cobweb, SMG's regular Saturday night disco, is to close its doors on Saturday 30 June. The discos began in January 1971 in a blaze of publicity, for they were the first of their kind in Scotland. Latterly the Cobweb has proved far too small and a search for new premises has been going on now for nearly a year. SMG are keen to open a general community centre, open 7 days a week, and providing members and friends with a wide range of services. Almost ideal premises have indeed been located in the central part of the city, but the present owners do not intend to vacate until early 1974. The cost (anticipated to be in the region of £35,000) will be met from the operation of a club licence and from loans. Until then the local community intend to continue with occasional social events — the campaigning side is not affected.

### Love's Magic Spell

BURNLEY: Five youths, who claimed a man had propositioned them, beat him up outside a hotel, a Burnley magistrate was told. The five pleaded guilty to assault and were each fined £20 with £2 costs.

### Petticoat For Gays

LONDON: Anne Nightingale, columnist for Petticoat Magazine (which sells mainly to girls in early teens) devoted a large chunk of her writing this issue to convincing readers that gay is good.

She opined that gays make excellent friends for a girl, and will take her out for a bang-up time — no strings attached — when she's feeling blue. Anne also urged her readers to show some sense towards homosexuality, in the hope that male heterosexuals may get over their fear and ignorance to follow this lead.

### Gay Murder Conviction

CHELMSFORD: Alan Melville, the 25 year old ex-Guardsman who battered a middle-aged gay man to death (GN24) has been jailed for life.

### The Boy Pill

LONDON: Professor John Postgate of Sussex University, writing in The New Scientist, has suggested that the surest way to curb population growth is to produce a pill virtually insuring that the result of any heterosexual pairing would be male.

There is a surprising prejudice amongst ordinary people in favour of having male children," he wrote. He reasoned that even with women receiving Queen Bee status, there would be few breeding opportunities.

What women might think of this he did not enter his calculations — nor did he speculate on what all those men would do with time on their hands and desire perhaps elsewhere.

### The Threat of Nasty Spinsters

LONDON: The Church of England, under increasing pressure to let in women clergy, has had from within a heavy reaction against such an idea. The chauvinistic rationale from clergymen included such opinions as "If the Lord had wanted women in the ministry, he would have appointed women apostles," and reticence because priestesses have historically been associated with sexual rites.

The real bon mot, however, came from the Bishop of Ripon: "The pressure isn't coming from ordinary housewives, you know. It's coming from acidic, embittered spinsters. It's only masculine, dominating women who want to become priests."



### The Queen Of May

Pictured is Lyn New, crowned May Queen, with Brian Johnson and George MacFarlane. The event was the first of what is planned as a yearly event at the Green Room of the Wheatstheaf, Shepherd's Bush. Runners-up "Wilma Smith" and Bobbi also featured heavily in gold lures.

# Police Close 'Too Gay' Dance Studio

Scarborough: Approximately 24 policemen raided a dancing school following a hot tip that several gays were amongst its regular customers, it was claimed at York Crown Court.

The club has now been closed. The counsel of club owner Kenneth Parkes (a judge on BBC's 'Come Dancing' TV show) explained: "The justices based their reasons on the fact that a number of gay people attended these premises." Parkes estimated that about ten of the 40 or so regular customers were gay.



The 'gaiety' was a bit too much for WPC Barton. She was repulsed by members of the same sex kissing each other.

"They could come somewhere to relax and have a drink with normal people. I never had any complaints at all", Parkes said. The so-called "normal" people included three customers, each married women, who explained that they had never seen any "indecent behaviour".

Parkes has been convicted on four charges of supplying drink after hours and employing a doorman under 18. He is appealing. Studio disc jockey Walter Fenwick (who is also GN's Scarborough rep) described the raid as "One big joke — about 24 policemen raiding a club like ours."



Ken Parkes received no complaints from non-gay members of his club.

GN has of late noticed a strong trend towards harassment of gays by a British police force who are continually bemoaning the fact that they are understaffed, but nevertheless find time to tramp through gay clubs and pubs in large numbers.

Now about 24 of them have seen fit to drive the evils of foxtrotting and gay chatter from Scarborough.

# Reminders And Jottings

### Regret Of The Month

GENTLE reader, please forgive us for the mysterious white lines and splurges of ink that smothered our last edition. We've had our printers guts for garters.

### Shortage Of Space

Owing to an acute shortage of space, we have been forced to hold over a number of articles and regular items until the next issue, including the results of the second GN competition. Also, the GN Mail Order Service is still operative, there just wasn't any room to feature it. Books listed in GN 24 are still available.

### Get Well Soon

Barry Conley, our theatre and general showbiz critic, is going into hospital for a minor operation, but thanks to his foresight, he has accumulated enough reviews to ensure that the Stage page remains one of the most informative and entertaining in the review section. While in hospital, he is going to write a feature on the new musicals currently playing in New York, some of which may be staged later this year in London. We feel sure that our readers will join us in wishing Barry a speedy return to good health.

### A New Face In The Art Dept.

Jean-Claude, our resident designer and illustrator, has been joined in our art department by David Rushton, a handsome 26-year-old, who originally hails from Liverpool. David assists with pasting up the paper and in the future will be illustrating some of the articles we intend to publish. David will also be involved in designing posters, which you may remember we wanted to start producing and selling through our mail order service.

### Our Gay Sports Hero For America

The Advocate, America's largest national circulation and most respected periodical for gays, has picked up on our lead feature in GN 23. In it we described how Tim Brand-Cromby stood a very good chance of becoming the first gay sports hero. The Advocate's editors, as do the editors of Gay News, consider this could be a major breakthrough for all gay people if Tim Brand-Cromby manages to achieve what he has resolutely set out to accomplish. Because of The Advocate's enthusiasm over this exclusive GN news feature, we have given them permission to reproduce the story in one of their forthcoming editions.

### Dates and Deadlines

The next edition of Gay News (No 26) will be published and available on June 28. Details of deadlines and copy dates for that issue can be found under the contents section on Page 2. It is important to make a note of these dates to avoid disappointment.

Gay News

# Solution

WE apologise to GN Crossword addicts for this regular feature's non-appearance in this issue. Space problems have forced us to hold over the one we have prepared until GN 26.

This is the solution to GN No 7/73, which appeared in the last edition of the paper.

- |                        |                                 |
|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <b>Clues Across</b>    | <b>Clues Down</b>               |
| 1. Last of the Wine    | 1. Late show                    |
| 7. Hi.                 | 2. Shufflewick (Mrs)            |
| 8. Trumpet (S-trumpet) | 3. Tim (Tim-e/ Tiny Tim)        |
| 10. Dolly.             | 4. Fee                          |
| 13. Last Will          | 5. Endowed                      |
| 15. Hole               | 6. Nil (Nil-e)                  |
| 18. Ore (wh-ore)       | 9. Pal.                         |
| 19. In bed (anag)      | 11. Lilac Domino                |
| 20. CHE.               | 12. Ye. (Ye-t)                  |
| 22. Edit (tide rev.)   | 14. Sober (anag)                |
| 23. Richards           | 16. Or (wh-or-ing)              |
| 26. Poker              | 17. Let it gel.                 |
| 28. Wan King           | 19. I Charge.                   |
| 31. An (An-ne)         | 21. Hi                          |
| 32. Blame his Tool.    | 24. Sin                         |
|                        | 25. Up                          |
|                        | 27. Oil.                        |
|                        | 29. Ali.                        |
|                        | 30. Kat (Kit Kat Club/ Ali Kat) |

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T	R	U	M	P	E	T	D	O	L	L		
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## Bobby's

PRIVATE GUEST HOUSE

BED & BREAKFAST served until noon

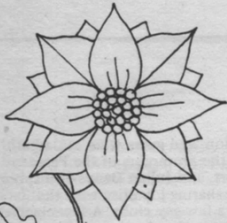
50 Egremont Place — Brighton

Tel: Brighton 683961

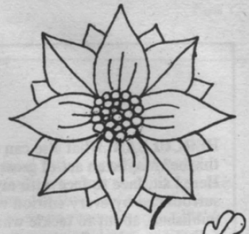
Easv Reach of Station  
Close to Seaford, Bars and Clubs  
Personal Attention Friendly Atmosphere  
Advance Bookings Central Heating

Photograph: Valentine Studios





# OSCARS



## The Gay News First Anniversary Awards

### ★ FILM

Oh Lucky Man! Director: Lindsay Anderson. Script: David Sherwin. Music: Alan Price. Stars: Malcolm McDowell, Ralph Richardson, Arthur Lowe, Dandy Nichols, Rachel Roberts, Mana Washbourne, Graham Crowden.

### ★ WORST FILM

Our Miss Fred Director: Bob Kellet. Stars: Danny La Rue, Alfred Marks.

### ★ PLAY

Jumpers Written by Tom Stoppard. Producer: Peter Woods. Stars: Michael Hordern, Diana Rigg, Alan McNaughton.

### ★ MUSICAL

Gypsy Music: Jules Styne. Lyrics: Stephen Sondheim. Director: Arthur Laurents. Stars: Angela Lansbury, Zan Charisse.

### ★ SHOW

Robinson Crusoe Produced, scripted and performed by Le Grand Magic Circus. (At the Roundhouse, Chalk Farm, London, for a season December 1972/January 1973.)

### ★ TELEVISION SHOW

The Magic Roundabout Shown on BBC1

### ★ T/V SHOW

Shut That Door Star: Larry Grayson. Shown on all commercial channels.

### ★ RECORD

Private Parts by Peter Straker. Written and produced by Ken Howard and Alan Blaikley. Released on RCA Victor.

### ★ WORST RECORD

Getting A Drag by Lindsey de Paul.

### ★ BOOKS

Non-fiction - Homosexual: Oppression and Liberation by Dennis Altman. Published by Angus & Robertson.  
Fiction - Fadeout by Joseph Hansen. Published by Harrap.

### ★ DRAG ARTIST

Mrs Shufflewick

### ★ PERIODICAL

Andy Warhol's Interview Magazine.

### ★ GAY ACTIVIST

Jamie Gardiner (for his outstanding contribution in preparing the NUS Gay Rights motion).

### ★ GAY EVENT

Campaign for Homosexual Equality's first National Conference held at Morecambe in April.

### ★ CONTRIBUTION TO GAYNESS

Jackie Forster (of Sappho)

### ★ POLITICIAN

Sam Green (Liberal councillor, Durham)

### ★ 'GET LOST' BRONZE MEDALLION

The Spartacus Guide For Travellers

### ★ THE CLIFF RICHARD AWARD

Cliff Richard

### ★ COTTAGE

The late, lamented Victoria Station assembly rooms.

### ★ 'COMMON MARKET' AWARD

The Boltons, Earls Court Road, London SW5

### ★ PROVOCATEURS

The Chelsea Police FORCE.

### ★ GREAT LIE

The unofficial Lord Longford Report on Pornography.

### ★ BEST FORGOTTEN

David Bailey's Andy Warhol television documentary.

### ★ GREATEST REGRET

Scottish Minorities Group's choice of 18 as the age of consent.

### ★ THE QUEEN CHARLOTTE AWARD FOR 'COMING OUT'

Joan Baez

### ★ OUTRAGE

The Melody Maker Affair.

### ★ HETEROSEXUAL DIPLOMA

Lord Jellicoe

### ★ LYNCH MOB NOMINATION

John Field and The News of the World Gang

### ★ FATHER FIGURE

David Bowie

### ★ THE NICE LITTLE OLD LADY PRIZE

Dorothy Squires

### ★ THE GOLDEN BOY SCOUT AWARD

Graham Chapman

### ★ SUMMER SPORTSMAN

Princess Anne.

### ★ THE GN 'GARLAND' STATUETTE

1st: Jim Bailey. 2nd: Liza Minnelli. 3rd: Peter Sellers

### ★ THE QUEEN'S AWARD TO INDUSTRY

Johnson & Johnson for you know what.

### ★ CHEEK OF THE YEAR

David Cassidy

### ★ THE PASCAL DANOT AWARD FOR PHOTOGRAPHY

The Earl of Snowdon.

### ★ INDIGESTION OF THE YEAR

Lunch.



# The Way We Learned To Walk

**HERCULEAN.** What else can something like this be? Maybe an act of gross unfairness. Here I sit, face to face with my typewriter, surrounded by every edition we have ever published, about to tackle what might hopefully become a collection of gay memories, a stroll back through the pages that made up our first year, an attempt to review some of the stories and campaigns that worked, and some that didn't.

If it works, maybe we should get somebody to record it and call it *Gay News' Greatest Hits*.

But it's a little hard, having lived in England for little more than six editions, to step back and cast a full-faced look at the first year of *Gay News*... but, said my colleagues, why not? And I just wasn't fast enough to dream up the right reason at the right time.

So here it is. The Tim Skinner Memorial Review of Twelve Months of *Gay News*. And I'm writing it with both hands, so it won't take too long.

*Gay News* Number One appeared after much preparation and heraldy - late. It was back in the days when we were doing that hard-boiled-egg thing on every page and a wide-eyed Jimmy Saville on the cover. It was an almost-hopeful story about Jimmy's near-gayness that didn't quite work, but we're all still very good friends.

Our first editorial goes under the 'best-of' series too. Remember... 'we won't be late again'... 'a collective is a grand idea'... and 'money has been a problem.'

*Gay News* 1 saw the birth of Julian Denys Grinspoon's famous *Biograph* Reviews where we discovered that the films didn't matter too much, it saw Cliff Richard as the first Het of the Month, Spare Rib, Time Out and *GIN* became our first display advertisers, and Denis Lemon told us that Dusty Springfield had always been a fine singer.

*Gay News* 2 hit the streets with a stunning statement in its editorial which said 'This is The Second Issue of *Gay News*', and on which we featured that now-legendary picture of David Seligman, firmly grasping a model of a male extremity in his right hand in a lovely glowing pink cover. Issue 2 found us still hoping for a large financial donor, we questioned the 1967 Sexual Offences Act and called it 'The 1967 Confidence Trick', we warned about increased police activity in Battersea Park, David Hockney became our first in-depth interview, and subsequently revealed very little. Spare Rib and Time Out advertised again, Julian Denys Grinspoon went back to the *Biograph* and seemed to be enjoying it. David Bowie made his first appearance on our pages when Doug Pollard reviewed his Ziggy Stardust album, and Parisian Jean-Claude Thevenin officially joined the GN collective.



Jean-Claude Thevenin, GN's design and art editor, conferring with Denis.

Something happened on the cover of *Gay News* 3 that got the old town talking. We carried a picture of two gay men kissing to point up the Gay Pride weekend at Fulham, the first one we covered. We didn't ask for a cent in our third editorial, but we were having trouble with W H Smith & Sons who repeated their emphatic refusal to distribute us.

*Gay News* 3 was when we went to chew things over with some friendly MPs in the House of Commons, we had gay oppression rife in South London, and Doug Pollard launched the first verbal attack on increasing violence against gays, Denis Lemon was waving a flag for Janis Joplin, Julian Denys Grinspoon was wearing himself out at the *Biograph*, we had only one big advertisement, our classifieds were picking up nicely, and Cliff Richard wasn't mentioned.

*Gay News* 4 was on time, printed properly, with more classifieds than ever, and it told of 'leather lawmen' patrolling the cottages

around Glasgow. Number four also had the half-negative results of the gay invasion of Parliament, Graham Chapman filled two incredible pages in the centre spread as a deep-thinker story by Denis Lemon, Julian Denys Grinspoon was back at the *Biograph*, complaining about the special fragrance of their air freshener and raving about John Wayne, nothing happened overseas, and our Het of the Month was changed to Queen of the Month.



Ian Dunn, GN's Scottish correspondent.

The cover of *Gay News* 5 was a disaster. We tried to marry some pretty Rod McKuen words with pictures, and the result was like yesterday's breakfast. Peter Holmes made his first appearance as a collective writer, we made it very clear that we needed more money to survive, we called Jackie Forster Jacquie Forster in the same line, we printed our very first libellous statement (and we're not saying what it was), David Bowie was at the Royal Festival Hall, and we called it *Gayrock* in a right-on story, Julian Denys Grinspoon had a ball at the *Biograph*, but we printed his reviews in the wrong order, we carried display ads for Follow-Up and the Classic Cinema, and Denis Lemon told us that Simon and Garfunkel's Greatest Hits album wasn't for trendies.

Number 6 was something like an onion and ice-cream pie. We challenged the dailies for immediacy with a cover story and UPI picture of that gay bank robber in New York. The sales results showed we pulled a wonderful turkey with that one. *Gay News* street-sellers were nabbed by police and a court case was set, Cliff Richard made page 5 because he was banned for performing in Singapore because of his 'long hair', we told how to troll in Saudi Arabia, and we devoted a feature to S&M.

David Bowie astonished everyone at the Finsbury Park Rainbow, our own Jean-Claude had a dreamtime drawing of him, the Pink Elephant advertised for the first time, so did Rod McKuen's publishers, we carried the story of the birth of Jeffrey, and we were offering a first prize in our contest to find a new logo for the front page. That prize... a free night out at the *Biograph* with Julian Denys Grinspoon, who was almost glued to his seat there.

*Gay News* No 7 was almost uneventful. It carried a very wordy and non-front-page front page and centre-spread feature all about 'The Other Love', and it told how there wasn't much hope of the gay laws being changed in South Australia. We went for a troll around Capri, it told how Denis Lemon was fined £5 for 'obstructing the sidewalk' outside the Coleherne while taking photographs of police harassment. Liberate appeared in our 'Return of the Het' column, display advertising slipped back a little, and Julian Denys Grinspoon didn't appear. Not the best issue.



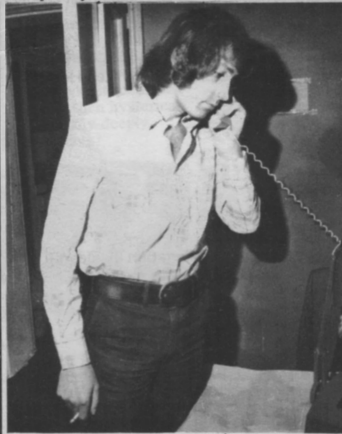
Sandi Rutenberg, the paper's patient and indispensable typesetter.

We called No 8 '16 sexy pages' and it really started to take on a nice professional look. The best issue by far. We had Lord Porn lashing back, a lot of drag gays arrested at the Notting Hill Gate pub, and a stunner of a story from the Manchester Council saying that their pier wasn't safe for a CHE Conference. CHE got three hours of radio time on Radio London, we had to apologise for selling out of copies of Issue 7, we trolled in Russia, Oz advertised for the first time, we learned that 'there are no homosexuals in the USSR', and we announced the death of the Julian Denys Grinspoon *Biograph* reviews, which has screwed my chances of mentioning him until issue 25. Apparently Julian D was interfered with during the climactic moments of 'Grove'.

Rupert Murdoch would have loved our cover on *Gay News* 9 for his *News of the World*. We labelled our front page story this way: 'Queers - I've Done What I've Wanted With Them'. 'Brutalising, Punching, Kicking and Stabbing'.

It was a David Seligman/Angus Suttie/Jeffrey Weeks/Micky Burbage interview with a self confessed 'queer basher' that made good, sensational reading. We also carried a noisy account of America's first fully legal gay marriage. In our pages on No 8, the BBC banned David Bowie's promotion film from their *Tops of the Pops* programme, we carried TEN display advertisements, and editorially, we libelled nobody.

There are a few very definite things I want to say about *Gay News* No 10. We were looking for more money, out display and classified advertising content was happily up, and it looked like we were selling more copies around more of England. William Vassall, the self-confessed spy, announced that he was gay, the world press was having a ball with 'gay gunmen' in half a dozen countries, we told how the Gay Civil Rights Movement was formed, we announced the birth of the Green Room at the Wheatshaf Hotel, Glasgow's Black Box News Agency was closed down, and author John Montgomery revealed to us that he wrote the book 'Queer People'. Unfortunately, in a number of copies, pages 7 and 10 were completely blank.



Yet another phone call for Denis Lemon, GN's editor.

*Gay News* No 11 was on time and nicely printed, we were still open for donations, and we called that issue 'Sixteen pages of Action Packed Gayness'. News-wise, it was an important edition... probably the most newsworthy one to date. We told about the introduction of gay television in the USA, about a verbal fight between an Australian female impersonator and New Zealand's Prime Minister, and a delightful interview with Mrs Shufflewick by David Seligman. Also, we carried the good news of Newcastle Library's decision to subscribe to *Gay News*, about the decision by the BBC to include a 40-minute weekly programme for minority groups, and would you believe, a return of Juiaun Denys Grinspoon, who skimmed over the *Biograph* and got his teeth into some really fleshy writing. And how's this. We carried advertisements for Thrust Records, The Pink Elephant, The Gay Times, Shanes, Fadeout, Le Faune, Sappho, A Fancy Dress Rave, Masquerade, Follow-Up.

*Gay News* 12 comes under the category 'Gee Whiz Data'. We called it 'Now Gayer Than Ever' and we stopped playing the role of hard newspapers and gave our covers over to display. In our editorial, we were still in agreement that it would be nice to accept contributions to keep going, and editorially, we were grasping contacts around the world. At home, we had a London Warhol week, a procession 'in memory of the Unknown Gay Dead', and an excellent small feature by Doug Pollard all about the anti-woes of getting old. From Ireland, there looked like a slight glimmer of hope for a local CHE

group formation, and guess what... a half page ad from the promoters of the Peter Straker concert, and Julian Denys Grinspoon was back, but sharing loyalties with the *Biograph* and a few gay clubs. A few changes. David Hart wrote a lovely piece on motor-bikes, we clamped down on too much liberal advertising in our classifieds, and we introduced a new column called 'Here We Are Again', in which we appealed for a new typewriter, complained that we were running out of space in our London Street offices, and we promised a bumper Christmas edition.



Advertising and circulation manager Peter Mundy.

There was never a *Gay News* No 13. We had a thirteenth edition, but it never carried a number. I didn't know we were ever so slightly superstitious too. But it was lavish and well done. A credit, surely, to anybody's six-month-old publication. News-wise, we beat most of the opposition. We told how Monty Python was castrated, we told how New Zealanders were furious because someone had been selling all-male nude calendars with the good bits covered up with brown tape, we had Mary Whitehouse going off to America to clean up US television, and we had news of Mrs Shufflewick's first record. In our Christmas feature department, the collective analysed Christmas, and to each his own, but Roger Baker wrote a lot. We had a feast of advertisements, we warned that we'd have to be even more strict with the classifieds, and Barry Conley wrote a creditable feature on Judy Garland.

Peter Holmes spent some time with Peter Straker - as promised - and wrote one of his many in-depths, which revealed not a lot, but Jean-Claude's illustrations were excellent. The Het of the Month was on vacation, Julian Denys Grinspoon took to Christmas cookery lessons, we gave Artist of the Year to David Bowie, and Roger Baker chose 'Technological Eating' as his Book of the Year. An excellent edition complete with a liftout Christmas Party Game. Oh and yes, two potential cases for Christmas libel.

*Gay News* 14 found us really asking for money. We said: "We started with not enough money to get past issue 3. This is *Gay News* 14. We still need money. £500 immediately, and another £1,500 to follow to guarantee our existence in 1973." We stated for the first time that everyone on the staff received a maximum of £15 a week, we were still looking for a typewriter, looking for new offices and we welcomed Peter Mundy, who joined us as advertising and distribution manager. News-wise, our first 1973 edition was heralded in with stories which told of Angela Weir being freed by an Old Bailey jury, we told of how three men in Stafford were jailed for what was called a 'bizarre and disgusting performance', and we carried a piece about Sir Michael Swann, the then-new BBC chief who said he was anti-gay and anti-permissive. We told how 1973 was a make-or-break year, we became Eurogays, and we blundered wonderfully. At least in the eyes of many people, with a thud so resounding that we're still hearing it. It was our 'Of Men and Little Boys' cover, and its associated story inside. Apparently, we learned a lesson in taste, and on how to keep a gay newspaper operating. Personally, I saw not a thing wrong with the story.

Then there was *Gay News* 15. 'Same Low Price', we said from our overcrowded offices in London Street. We'd been joined by Michael Mason, who started to whip the operational flaws out of our slowly blossoming routine and we launched a campaign to find street-sellers. From our pages of news, we had all kinds of rumours about David Cassidy and his mate Sam Hyman, and Ross McWhirter was making a great fuss by having the Andy Warhol documentary banned from British TV.

While The Sunday People ridiculed the staff of a gay pub in Lancashire, our issue 15 swooned over it, the Dutch Society for the

## ...Or Gay News' Greatest Hits

Integration of Homosexuality started fighting for Army gays, and David Seligman wrote a wonderful piece of advice to Paddington postmen who seemed to be eating our mail. We carried a small but pictorial feature on Danny La Rue, our editorials continued to get that heavy 'news' feel, Julian Denys Grinspoon continued to stay away, and there was a suggestion that we may have found new offices.



GN's financial wizard Michael Mason.

We had a lovely cover on Issue 16 which promised we'd have an equally valuable interview with Joe Dalessandro. It turned out to be a lot of space with a lot of boring words. But we learn, I'm told. Issue 16 had down in the Dilly looking at the trade, and over in Australia for the death of Sydney's brilliant gay paper, 'William and John'. While Peter Holmes told us very little about Joe Dalessandro, David Seligman embarked on a nice workable think piece about David Essex and assorted stars. We lost the egg from our front cover and started to revamp the shape of the paper, we were still after money and getting a little, but not enough, and we'd launched an appeal for a filing cabinet. Advertising was up, classified were toned down to the right level, and in all, Gay News was starting to shape into something well worth 10p.

Gay News 17 had a wonderful London front page. Taken in the Dilly under the 'Finger Lickin' Good' sign. We were apparently hopelessly overcrowded in our old offices, but all set for a move to another part of town, we still needed more money, and our printers were having troubles getting the colours right. But we were telling more and more news and treating it more seriously. From New York, we had the Gay Activist Alliance helping the state police in murder investigations, from Los Angeles, news of a gay synagogue, and at home, Birmingham fifth-formers gave heavy backing to the Gay Liberation Front. In Belfast, students were lobbying to make gay sex legal, across in Columbus, Georgia, hustling had the state authorities worried, and in London we told how the Observer said that Liberace was definitely not homosexual.

Number 18 was hard to recognise. We had a printing problem with our front cover. But it was our first real clash with a giant... Gay News 18 bugled in a time of change in the newspaper. It saw the departure of Peter Holmes, and at last, a move to the new spacious offices at 34d (for downstairs) Redcliffe Square (where we're currently running out of space) in Earls Court. Circulation was up, but so were the costs, and therefore, our appeal for money continued. David Seligman was writing film reviews fit for Fleet Street, and Denis Lemon was making Melody Maker wince. Jean-Claude was drawing deftly, Peter Mundy was selling more advertising, and Mike Mason was doing everything. And in issue 18, an advertisement for a news editor appeared. News-wise, we fought on. We supported Smiths Newsagents (not to be confused with W H Smith) in their refusal to sell The News of the World after they ran a totally anti-gay story. They in turn, gave Gay News pride of place in their shop window display. In other stories, two women army officers were discharged in the US for admissions of lesbianism, CHE decided to hold its conference in Morecambe, we carried what turned out to be a much-read feature on the 'street boy sale' in New York and we warned about more local cottage raids.

Issue 19 saw a bright step ahead in Gay News. More news, more features, more reader reaction, more advertising, but still, an appeal for money. We'd moved offices and because

I happened to be reading Gay News at the right time, I saw that advertisement for a news editor, applied, started work the next day, and hello. Our front cover on 19 must have been one of the best. It was the-transsexual boyfriend of the gay charged with the New York bank holdup last year. We had Sam Green admitting his gayness, we had Joan Baez admitting that she had once had a 'beautiful lesbian affair', and Gay News made its own stories by helping out with the teach-in on homosexuality at Edinburgh University. We carried our first fashion feature, there was a photo page on Mae West, and Andy Warhol's 'Heat' commenced its London season.

We hope that Issue 20 was the start of a totally valuable newspaper. The price was increased to 15p and the circulation which we feared might drop, rose slightly. We increased the permanent size of Gay News to 20 pages, and printed what became our best cover. David Cassidy and Sylvia Miles. We won an exclusive feature interview with Sylvia, and gave our new French photographer, Pascal Danot, a chance to show the other papers that we knew how to take good pictures. We played with David Cassidy's cheeks, and as a result, found ourselves in line for praise and criticism for 'exploitation of fantasy'. We paid tribute to Sir Noel Coward, reviewed (collectively) and tore David Bailey's Andy Warhol TV programme to small shreds. Our record reviews challenged whatever they do in the multi-sales pop papers, and the classifieds grew well into two pages. And one vitally important stage in the development of Gay News was reached. It stopped appealing for money.



Tim Skinner, news editor 'extraordinaire'.

At Issue 21, we came of age. Circulation was up again, we went to the big CHE Conference at Morecambe, and devoted a lot of space to it, the Sexual Offences (Scotland) Bill was introduced, 360,000 students voted for Gay Rights, and we won a two-page exclusive interview with Joan Baez - an interview which has won us a lot of national approval. In it, Joan admitted her one-time gayness. We changed the name of 'Here We Are Again' to 'Reminders and Jottings', we announced the introduction of a national enquiry into anti-gay discrimination, and we celebrated Easter over a bottle of champagne and a slice of toast and marmalade.

More changes to Gay News No 22 brought us more into line with a newspaper with responsibilities. We shaped our editorials into hard-line matters of policy and provocation, and invited harsh reaction from another newspaper. We scored national publicity as a result of a survey in Fleet Street after Melody Maker refused to carry a Gay News advertisement. We moved further into the realm of responsibility by analyzing the Australian Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam, and we established a permanent news liaison with the Gay Activist Alliance in New York.

Issue 22 also told how Cliff Richard didn't win that Eurovision Song contest, Sha Na Na explained they used KY to make their hair shiny and we published a wonderful chummy picture of Sam Hyman with David Cassidy. Jenny Fabian explained that she was a lesbian, and we carried our first half-page advertisement on the back cover.

By the time Number 23 had arrived, we had a new staff member, Mike Nightingale, who made wonderful tea and coffee. We got new lights for our artroom, a new desk for our general newsroom, and a new staff biro. News-wise though, we hopefully managed to publish the best paper to date. We uncovered a self-confessed gay in Tim Brand-Cromby, who, as a professional sportsman, might become our first Gay

Sports Hero. Which is why we put him on the cover. By the time that story was finished, we had another staff upheaval. David Seligman went to Canada, and we replaced him with Stephen MacLean.



Mike Nightingale, responsible for subscriptions and postal 'affaires'.

another Australian, and a great asset. We published the findings of our nationwide gay accommodation survey and sparked off a wave of good reaction, we took two anti-gay candidates to task, and analysed the giant press-carve-up of Doctor Coggan, the outspoken Church of England Archbishop. We heard that gay policemen were on the beat in New York, the body of actor, model, drag artist, and friend of GN, Wolfgang von Jurgan was found in the Thames, the West German Parliament passed a Bill to legalise male prostitution, and also lowered the age of consent there to 18. We interviewed the new NUS president, John Randall, A&M records decided that our Pascal's photos of Joan Baez were the best in Europe and used them for her new album poster, and our sales figures crept slightly higher.

And so to issue 24... the one before this one. Naturally we want to think it's the best we've done. Stephen has pushed the news pages into shape magnificently. We're telling as much as we can. Denis analysed the happenings at Earls Court with David Bowie and Rod McKuen gave us one of the most intimate interviews he's ever given.

Our editorials are tougher, our campaigns harsher. The sacred cows we hoped we'd never have, we now do not have.

This quarter-century edition (nicer than just the 25th) is aimed at whipping up more reaction, and hopefully, more sales.

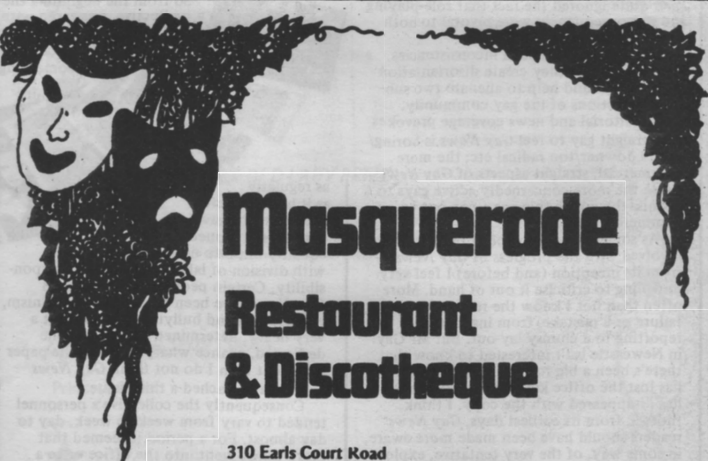
So how can I sit here, two and a half hours later, and say fairly I am in a position to summarise the growth of Gay News? I can't. Just accept it as honest when I say that after being aboard for only six editions, it's more exciting every time. There have been some historic blunders - even a few libellous errors - but we now think we've got a good hold of Gay News in the right place.

And seeing you've read this far, it can't be all that bad, can it?

Tim Skinner



Stephen MacLean, GN's reporter at large.



## Masquerade Restaurant & Discotheque

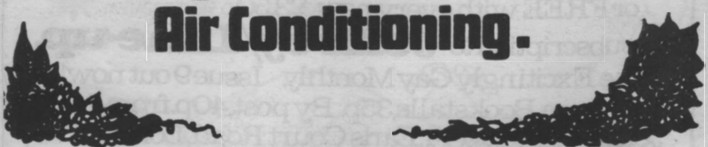
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# Brickbats And Bouquets

## A Frank Critique From A Friend

I believe, quite firmly, that *Gay News* is the best thing that has happened for the gay world in this country. Some people may put other developments higher: counselling services, perhaps, or the growth of organisations. I remain suspicious of the former — no matter what groovy title they emerge under — and am frankly disillusioned about the last. And I think of a remark in Dennis Altman's book when he suggests that an isolated gay person would acquire a much greater sense of community through reading the gaypress than from listening to any amount of worthy broadcasts by the Mattachine Society. And by community I do not mean some privileged enclave to which the person might aspire, but, rather, a sense that there are lots of other gay people around, some with similar problems, some without.

So far, *Gay News* has not achieved this position, but I still feel it has the potential to do so. At the moment the paper falls badly between two stools. On one hand there is the need to project some of the radical principles of gay liberation in editorial outlook, comment and treatment of news stories. On the other there seems to be a survival need to incorporate certain compromises which makes the paper seem, often, a reflection of the straight-gay scene. This conflict is most clear when one sets the review section against the rest. For example, something that *Gay News* may reasonably oppose is the stereotyping, and putting down of gay people in the entertainment industry. A news story will, therefore, be snide about someone like Larry Grayson. Yet the paper's review of *Applause* made no comment at all on the dreadful gay bar scene in that dreadful show.

Similarly the comments on Rogers and Starr were equally bland (ironical that the only relevant comment on them was made by *Time Out*). The difficulties — for straights and gays — that attend the need for role-playing are a constant preoccupation in homosexual dialogue. And one is quite likely to find an article along these lines in the middle of *Gay News*. Yet reviews of *Time and Time Again* and *Last Tango in Paris* quite ignored the fact that role-playing and its consequences were pivotal to both entertainments.

One could repeat such inconsistencies. My point is that they create disorientation in the reader and help to alienate two substantial sections of the gay community. Thus, editorial and news coverage provokes the straight gay to feel *Gay News* is boring/dull/a downer/too radical etc; the more commercial, straight aspects of *Gay News* cause the more concernedly active gays to dismiss the whole thing as a cop-out to commerce.

As someone who has been fairly closely involved with the progress of *Gay News* from its inception (and before) I feel very unwilling to criticise it out of hand. More often than not I know the reason for a failure or a mistake, from inaccurate reporting to a clumsy lay-out. But Mr Gay in Newcastle isn't interested to know that there's been a big row, or that someone has lost the office keys or that someone has 'disappeared with the copy'. I think, though, from its earliest days, *Gay News* readers should have been made more aware, in some way, of the very tentative, exploratory nature of the project. But *Gay News* has always been very well designed and

printed (compare it with any other underground sheet); it comes on strong. Hence the surprised dismay just before Christmas when it became known that the outfit was in severe financial straits.

An outsider, like myself, with a little experience of journalism and newspaper production, could see difficulties ahead from the outset. *Gay News* began, laudably and properly, as a collective enterprise. This meant it was to be produced by a collective of individuals, all with equal say in the running of the paper. Ideas, writing talent and enthusiasm were high; practical experience and comprehension were low. Now if you are going to produce a paper or magazine on an irregular basis, this system could conceivably produce something that is exciting, original and perhaps brilliant. But *Gay News* was also promoted, advertised, subscriptions solicited and accepted. And at once a firm commitment to a readership had been made.

At this point it is as well to consider, in general terms, that initial unreliability of gay publications was notorious, but gay publications in this country had always been glossy or semi-glossy magazines, genital-orientated and highly (necessarily) commercial. A drop in income, a more than usual interest by the public, would cause a hiatus. But as I say, Mr Gay isn't interested in the background: all he knows is that he has paid his money and isn't getting the goods. No gay publication is immune from these difficulties, no matter how high-minded the producer (witness *Gay International News* which has behaved, apparently, quite as badly as any commercial gaymag).

So from the beginning the collective was faced with the moral necessity of producing something

as regularly as it had predicted. And immediately concepts of collective equality ran into head-on conflict with division of labour and areas of responsibility. Certain people connected with *Gay News* have been accused of chauvinism, ego-tripping and bullying. But without a very heavy, determined hand, someone dedicated, chance what, to seeing the paper come out then I do not think *Gay News* would have reached a third issue.

Consequently the collective's personnel tended to vary from week to week, day to day almost. For a period it seemed that every time I went into the office or to a collective meeting I was confronted by yet another bright ring of faces, bright-eyed

and bushy-tailed (especially bushy-tailed). The collective tended to attract people who thought they might like to write, rather than people who were willing to engage in the nitty-gritty of reporting and the repetitive tedium of magazine production. It also attracted people who seemed to view it as a kind of awareness group through which to relieve their own highly peculiar hang-ups. Some who came (and went) are to be regretted. There is a lot of talent flying around. But *Gay News* could never support occasional writers on a full time basis. One thing I hope for its future is that it will be able to do just that.

Looking back over the past two dozen issues, certain things strike me. One is that the first six or so issues are (or seem) so much more interesting than those being produced just now. I tend to think this is an illusion, however.

Because any new magazine or newspaper goes through a period of experiment, to find out how to go about it.

Then it settles down almost to a formula which makes it seem predictable. The unique quality of the early *Gay News* made each issue a genuinely new experience. Now it has settled down to a sort of plateau of sameness that makes each issue seem similar to the last. As I say, this is inevitable. But it is important to know whether the final formula is, in fact the right one. This feeling of sameness also helped to explain why some people find reading the newspaper a downer. To repeat similar stories of police harassment week after week, to tear apart the comments of reporters in the straight press over and over again will defuse the critical/campaigning force of this work and make it seem first boring, then hysterical and finally deeply depressing.

Attitudes to campaigning and to social criticism are things that *Gay News* might well re-think at this stage.

Past issues also indicate (to me at least) that the oft-heard cry that *Gay News* is of no interest to women somewhat over-stated. Obviously an editorial collective that has only ever had two women associated with it (and that briefly) is going to see things through male eyes; and it would be dangerously wrong for those men consciously to try and add female-appeal to the newspaper themselves. Only gay women really know what gay women want and know what would make *Gay News* more relevant to them. Add to this the undeniable fact that

more often than not what makes for gay news usually involves men.

On the other hand, however, it seems to me that the higher proportion of material contained in *Gay News* is of equal interest to men and women — and I include the lengthy review section here. Profiles of women, comment by women, pieces about women are frequent. If it is a serious problem, I think the only possible way to try and solve it is to have some women deeply involved with the newspaper. But where are they?

There is a substantial section that has little woman-appeal — the personal contact ads. But this is an important campaigning feature of *Gay News* and one would hope that female readers support it, politically if not emotionally. This section, incidentally, also emphasises the conflict between radical and conformist perspectives. Theoretically we should hold that anyone has a right to advertise for any sort of sexual experience they need. But if these columns are to make a point, then, realistically, the advertisements should be of exactly the same weight as similar ones carried for heterosexual contacts in the straight press. A glance through the past 24 issues reveals too, a very good documentation of one gay year. Some of the reporting has been inaccurate, some unfair. But we have had fun, been murdered; made speeches, been arrested; held meetings, held dances; been tolerated by bishops and rejected by councillors, and so on and so on. This has a cumulative effect, indicating the breadth of the gayworld, underscoring the truth that homosexuals cannot be stereotyped but are essentially heterogeneous. And this, of course, is why *Gay News* cannot hope to appeal to every gay person.

But it is good to see it hanging outside the newsagent, flanked by *Melody Maker* on one side and *Amateur Gardening* on the other. This is integration: standing — individual, independent, not better, not worse — alongside the rest of the community.

*Gay News* can continue (money and staff problems are no easier than before) then it is certain that in the coming year, it will become more and more a regular newspaper. Formal distribution would mean its appearance way beyond the present handful of newsagents. This can only be a good thing. But I hope it will not be accompanied by an increasing blandness in approach.

One other thing is striking, from back issues. And that is a really creepy preoccupation with a pop singer called David Bowie. Rarely an issue is allowed to escape without a picture of this young man — and when all available photographs had been used, then Jean-Claude actually drew him. I think the David Bowie organisation ought to support the next twelve months of *Gay News*, so there.

Roger Baker

ED: Roger Baker has been a close friend of *GN* since its birth, but not too involved to write an unbiased, critical appraisal of its development. Many of Roger's profound and significant articles on divers subjects appeared in our pages.



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# The Real Evelyn Waugh

by John Montgomery

THE PUBLICATION in the Observer of edited extracts from the late Evelyn Waugh's diaries has given readers a one-sided view of a writer whose character was too complex to be easily dismissed. Critics who condemn him on the strength of these extracts as being unpleasant or evil cannot have known him well.

I worked on his behalf for 16 years as junior partner to his literary agent. In E W I found only kindness, a devastating sense of humour, great wit, consideration and loyalty. He was certainly eccentric, but this is not unusual among men and women of great ability. I think he rather enjoyed it.

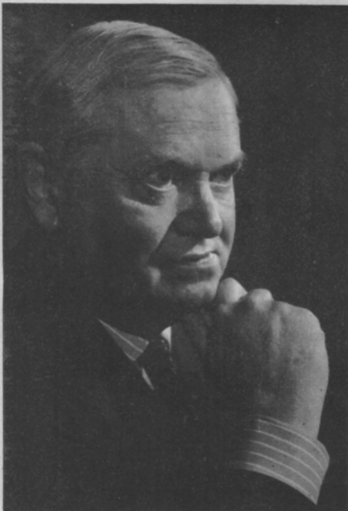
When he visited London I often lunched with him at White's or at the Ritz, and looked forward to these meetings, which were often business discussions. He was far more entertaining than most of our authors, and twice as funny. He was also a great gossip, which was jolly, because so am I.

The private diary which he kept was obviously not intended to be read by the vulgar public, but it does not reveal the whole man.

I have some of his first editions inscribed to me "With thanks for your many kindnesses", and "With gratitude" and postcards and letters full of good humour and warmth. He never wasted words. One card says: "Thank you for making the BBC pay such a magnificent fee. E W".

I had (I believe my memory is correct) obtained for him a very large fee for his appearance with John Freeman in the BBC programme 'Face To Face'. King Hussein, Orson Welles and all the other notables had accepted a set fee of fifty pounds each. I believed Evelyn Waugh was worth much more, and obtained it for him. One was often able to increase fees for clients, but not all were so appreciative.

The journalist Alan Brien recently revealed in his Sunday newspaper column that during a stormy exchange of insults he accused E W of being a latent homosexual. I never needed to do that. E W himself told me, at luncheon at the Ritz, that he possessed more than a fair share of homosexuality.



"You mean you've had some homosexual experience?" I asked.

"Yes," he replied, "first at school and then later."

"You mean you were in love with another boy?" I asked. "But surely, that's quite common when one is young?"

He replied: "Yes, but one's schooldays influence the rest of one's life. I have always lived on the fringe of homosexuality, and I have been influenced by it."

I replied that this was obvious from his novels.

"Which one in particular?"

"Brideshead," I replied. "And there's the part in 'Love Amongst The Ruins' where all the homo's are made by the state to wear green ties. That's a very sympathetic reference to people who are gay."

He knew the word 'gay' as an Americanism and said it was difficult to attach labels to peoples' sexual inclinations. I said I thought everyone was basically bisexual, but that sexual preference varied one way or the other, and observed no rules. It would be a pity, I added, if everyone were alike.

"It would be horrible," said E W. "Imagine everyone being like Beaverbrook."

Fortified by pheasant and an excellent wine, I asked him why in conversation he usually referred to homosexuals as 'buggers', when sodomy was no more exclusive to homo's than to so-called heterosexuals. He looked surprised at this, and admitted it was inaccurate of him. "But I like to shock people," he said.

I thought, from the way he examined the menu and asked me if I would like some pudding, that he had tired of the conversation, but he shouted the next word so loudly that others in the dining room looked around, startled.

"Buggery!" he exclaimed. "Buggery is a subject that has always interested me."

I now realise that he wanted to embarrass or satisfy other eaters who were listening carefully in the hope that he would say something outrageous or indiscreet. To make certain that I also spoke loudly, he produced his ear trumpet, an ancient instrument made of horn.

"Was there much buggery at your school?" he asked.

"Yes," I replied loudly. "I know there was also a lot at Lancing because we used to play a two-day cricket match against you. I also knew several of your old boys in my regiment."

"Do you think it still continues?" he demanded.

"Yes, I'm sure it does — in all the boarding schools. A few years ago I saw half-a-dozen Lancing boys pick up a group of fellows in a Brighton pub during half term. The school was almost deserted. I was told they entertained their guests in one of the studies."

This intrigued E W so much that he again pretended not to have heard me, picked up his ear trumpet, applied it to his ear, and made me elaborate. I think it was mainly for the benefit of the waiter, who hovered behind him.

Two days later I received an undated postcard with a Taunton postmark. It said: "THANK YOU FOR YOUR ENTERTAINING COMPANY. AVOID LANCING. E W."

It is now clear to me that those whom E W attacked were those who offended him. I believe that he was not very kind to Beverly Nichols, teasing him about his writing. In this direction I presented a sure target, for E W knew I had written several animal books, and two novels that might have been described as suitable for safe family reading, if they were not downright cosy. But he never once scorned my efforts, and in fact always made a point of asking what I was writing, and at least appeared to be interested.

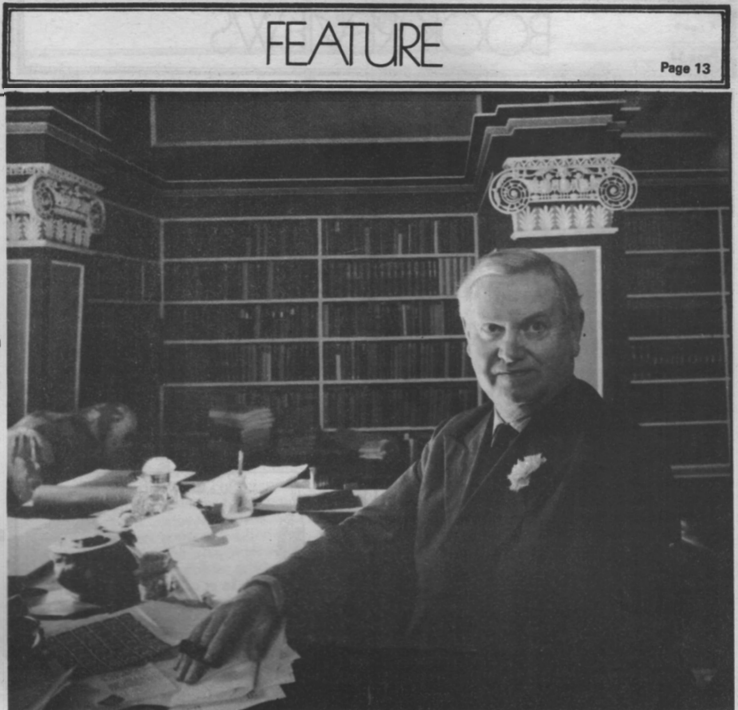
I recognise that he was moody, introspective, generally unsociable, and, to use his own expression, 'unclubable'. He was therefore very vulnerable, and often prickly. But I was well aware that writers, poets, painters and composers are people apart, and are not quite like bankers, industrialists or makers of strawberry jam.

Most of the people who have recently rushed into print about E W seem to have met a totally different man to the one I knew. Or, perhaps, they were unable to penetrate the mask.

The late A D Peters, the founder and head of our firm, was asked last September how he got on with our client, "the crusty Evelyn Waugh".

He said: "He was one of the easiest men to get on with. If he was ever horrible, it was because he wanted to be, and I think that side of him was much exaggerated." He added that he wouldn't give much for any artist or author who wasn't somewhat temperamental.

Apart from showing great loyalty to his friends, E W was quick to recognise and appreciate loyalty in others. He once asked



after a friend of mine who was living with a Hollywood film actress. "And how is his PARAMOUR?" he asked. I decided it was time for me to defend the lady, who was a good friend. So, like E W, I became slightly deaf.

"I'm so sorry," I said, "What did you say? Oh no, I don't think she ever acted for them. She worked for MGM."

He roared with laughter, and said, "I'm glad to see the age of chivalry isn't dead."

He seems never to have been unkind, rude, or even thoughtless to people whom he judged could not, or would not, hit back. Although frequently described as a snob, he got on famously with the most unlikely people. When a rather odd foreign film producer asked if he could meet him to discuss a film project, E W invited him to lunch and they became firm friends.

Nothing came of the proposed film, but

they continued to meet, and drink vodka together, E W talking in impeccable English and the film man replying in a mixture of American and Polish.

I once suggested to him that he was an incurable romantic. He pretended to be surprised. "Do you think so?" he said. "I'm sure of it" I replied. This, I believe, is the clue to his character. Yet no-one has bothered to say so. Whatever sentimental, romantic liaison he formed at Lancing College was reflected in all his work, and although he often attempted to subdue and hide it by drinking too much, or shocking people, or being fierce and unpleasant, he was by nature emotional and anxious to be loved.

He was also, of course, the greatest living English novelist of his time, and may yet be unequalled in this century.

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## one in six men are

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## Of Androgynes

*THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS* — Ursula Le Guin. Panther, 35p.

I first experienced Ursula Le Guin's magical use of words in *A WIZARD OF EARTHSEA* — an imaginative spell-binding tale published in the Puffin children's series. Only recently did I discover that she has a large following among sci-fi buffs, who regard her as a distinguished writer of futuristic fiction in the same class as Michael Moorcock and Frank Herbert.

*THE LEFT HAND OF DARKNESS* is more than an unusual and beautiful story, it is one of the most forceful vindications of freedom — sexual, psychical, political — likely to be found in a novel of any kind. The bulk of the narrative is in the form of a report by Ai, a Terran envoy sent to the planet Gethen to find out its attitude to the Ekumen — a sort of interplanetary EEC.

The inhabitants of Gethen are all androgynes; unless an individual is abnormal in some way, he has the ability both to procreate and to conceive. But sexual activity can only take place during a twenty-six day cycle called 'kemmer' and not until love-making is well under way can a person tell what his sexual identity is going to be.

At a State function in the capital city of Karhide — a Gethenian country — Ai meets and is strangely drawn to Estraven, the Prime Minister, who reciprocates the attraction. But, paradoxically, Estraven is the one Gethenian he distrusts, and when his mission goes wrong he suspects Estraven of treachery. In fact the betrayer is the King's adviser, Tibe, who wants Ai out of the way and who also engineers Estraven's banishment. Ai journeys to a neighbouring country, Orgoreyn, whose government is seemingly enthusiastic about the Ekumen. However, the politicians there are a two-faced lot and Ai is arrested by a reactionary faction called the Sarf and taken to a prison farm where he is given depersonalising and desexualising drugs. Estraven, who has been given political asylum in Orgoreyn, bribes one of the Sarf to disclose the whereabouts of Ai.

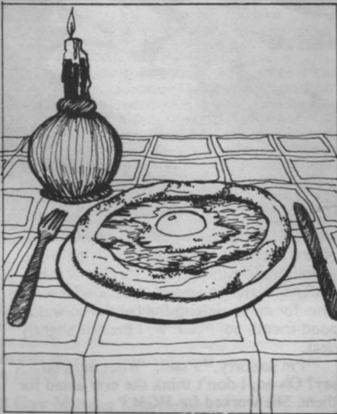
With forged papers he manages to pose as a prison guard and rescue Ai. They are now both outlaws and have to struggle across hundreds of miles of sub-arctic territory to reach the Karhidish border. Ai is still weak from the drugs; as he gathers strength he realises that he loves Estraven who, far from betraying him, is the only person to have loved, trusted and fully accepted him. He comes to understand the reason for his distrust; it was his ambisexual nature which repelled as much as it attracted him. Because of the physiological complications, they cannot express their love but rely instead on 'mindspeak', a process of wordless communication which Ai teaches Estraven. The story ends tragically when Estraven's enemies hunt

him down, but the book's 'message' is essentially one of hope.

I cannot speak too highly of this book. For all her involvement in the characters, Ursula Le Guin never loses her cool; the love theme never becomes sentimental, nor the fantasy far-fetched. The writing is evocative, crystal in quality, with none of the rococo whimsy that irritates me in Moorcock's *Runestaff* novels for example. If Joseph Hansen has opened up new possibilities for detective fiction with his *Fadeout*, Ms Le Guin has done the same for sci-fi.

Lebbie Robinson

## The Bedsit Gourmet



*EASY COOKING FOR ONE OR TWO* by Louise Davies. Penguin, 40p

THIS IS the fourth reprint of a cookery book published in 1972 — so you can tell how successful it has been. I've been using my original copy for over a year so can vouch for the reliability and inventiveness (also the ease) of the recipes. I say this first because you will find the book is designed primarily for the over 60s — which I ain't. All the recipes have been tried and proved

by Retirement cookery classes all over the country, and they stick to the policy of the Geriatric Nutrition Unit of Queen Elizabeth College at the University of London.

However the problems of eating alone are the same however old or young you might be, and I like this book because the food is good but inexpensive, helps to solve the big problem of finding quantities small enough for one and offers explicit instructions (with good illustrations). A lot of main course dishes are devised to use just one saucepan and burner. Here is a nice pudding from the book which I, rather irreverently call 'geriatric pudding' and which emerges from the oven in a most surprising way. Whisk up in a big bowl all together until smooth: juice and rind of half a lemon; 1 oz of soft margarine; 2 oz of castor sugar; an egg yolk; 1 oz of self raising flour and 8 tablespoonsful of water (¼ pint). Fold in the beaten egg white. Pour it all into a greased dish and bake in the middle of the oven (Gas mark 4) for 20 - 30 minutes.

Roger Baker

## For The Stronger Stomach

*The Soft Machine* — William Burroughs (Calder & Boyars 75p)

*The Wild Boys* — William Burroughs (Calder & Boyars £1.00)

TO READ a Burroughs novel is to savour vicariously the exquisite experience of digesting a plate of raw shredded liver, blood-pulp and all. Never have I felt this sensation more keenly than in reading *The Soft Machine*. Originally published in Paris as a successor to *The Naked Lunch* in 1961, it appears now in an edition extensively revised by the author. Like raw liver, one must allow that this book contains a great deal of nourishment. Whilst all Burroughs books are born of a drug consciousness, *The Soft Machine* takes the world of junk as one of its themes in this study of conflicts, men fighting for control of themselves, of their

existence, and too often losing the fight pitifully. He explores the fierce electric violence of the drug experience, and the cold and ruthless commerce of supply: "I see he is hooked and sick familiar face maybe from the pool hall where I scored for tea sometime somewhere in grey strata of subways all night cafeterias rooming house flesh. His eyes flickered the question. I nodded toward my booth."

Most exciting is the use of the individualistic fold-in technique which was seen in *The Naked Lunch* but has been developed here to a new level, interweaving fact and fantasy in a thoroughly hypnotic way. Starting with a deliberate sequence of ideas and events, sentences used in the introit are condensed, phrases lifted out without conjunction, so that each tiny word group acts as a tag for an earlier and more explicit idea. Piling one such phrase upon another, he manages to achieve a sense of vertiginous pace that leaves the reader dazed. So fast and furious is this pace, indeed, that the intellect gradually disengages to the point where the writing operates almost entirely sensually upon the mind.

This sensuality does nothing but heighten the (gay) eroticism that plays such an important part in the book. The sexual encounters are crude, certainly, but their crudity is not that of the hack porn-monger lingering over, harping on, every last ghastly detail of *The Act*. Rather it is an intrinsic rawness in the encounters themselves, as hard and as animal like as the junkie world he portrays.

*The Naked Lunch* endured the tribulation of a court room trial. This later book, members of the jury, is one which, if you have no love of good writing, you will find totally lacking in literary merit.

In *The Wild Boys* (which has become available in paperback since the hard cover edition was reviewed way back in GN 3) Burroughs has retreated somewhat from the full use of his 'fold-in' technique. Still there, it is not employed to the same extent as it was in *The Soft Machine*, which has earned it the tag "his most accessible book since *The Naked Lunch*". A story line and clear thematic development are not anathema to Burroughs. The tale of the young savages (savages in that they live totally outside the social and sexual mores of the Civilized World) is handled with consummate skill, and blended successfully with the kaleidoscopic imagery and frenetic eroticism which devotees have come to expect. Still a compelling and exciting read.

Michael Mason



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# Mama Knows Best

**GYPSY** at the Piccadilly Theatre, Brewer Street, London W1.

**SHOW STOPPER** is not a word to be found in the dictionary, but it exists nonetheless. Every year there are numerous musicals produced on stage, and within each season, one of these shows may have a special moment: when the combination of both star and material fuses into one, the audience almost rises to its feet to applaud, and you have what is termed a 'show stopper'. The last time I had the pleasure to witness one, was early in 1972, towards the end of the show **COMPANY**, when Elaine Stritch sang **Ladies Who Lunch**. The venue this year is the Piccadilly Theatre, where nightly Angela Lansbury takes the stage alone to sing **Rose's Turn**. It is not a coincidence that both song lyrics were written by Stephen Sondheim, but more of that later.

**GYPSY** began life as the autobiography of the famous stripper Gypsy Rose Lee. In it, she told with great wit and candour, the story of her childhood, along with her younger sister (later to become film actress June Havoc) as they toured the theatres of America. The central character throughout the story, was her mother, known by theatre people as 'a stage mother'. Rose Havoc combined all the worst qualities to be found in this type of woman, depriving her children of a normal home life, by pushing them on the stage into the sort of variety act that helped kill American vaudeville in the late 20's.

Arthur Laurent's adaption of this biography became the stage musical **GYPSY**, and Ethel Merman scored a huge personal success in the role of Rose when it was first produced there 14 years ago. It seems hard to believe that so many years have passed, with endless rumours that the great Merman herself would bring the show to London. Finally it has reached our shores, and with its tuneful Jules Styne score, perceptive lyrics by Stephen Sondheim, and star Angela Lansbury, all is well, and it should prove an equal success this side of the Atlantic, in spite of many being already acquainted with the score and story via the film version of some years ago.

What struck me about the show, first and foremost, is its brilliant construction. Each song is placed perfectly into the proceedings and helps the action along. The dialogue is often extremely funny, far more so than the average musical. Studying the character of Rose during the show, one is aware that the lady is little better than a monster. From her first entrance, intruding upon the proceedings of a talent competition, to her return home where she 'borrows' her father's silver citation to raise some needed cash, to her treatment of Baby June as she pushes her forward, neglecting the older Louise and making her feel plain and unwanted, right down to the way she uses Herbie in their relationship - she just isn't a very nice person. How then is she to be played, if the audience is to have any feeling for her? By some miracle, Angela Lansbury manages to capture occasional glimpses that underneath everything, the woman isn't

entirely bad, and perhaps in her way she does mean well for her children. She allows just enough warmth to shine through her portrayal, so that one never entirely loses patience with her.

As any true filmgoer knows, Angela Lansbury has, over the years, done more than her share to brighten every film in which she has appeared. In her final song, after finding Louise no longer has need for her help or interference, she walks onto the empty stage and sings about her dreams and schemes for all the people in her life. With Sondheim's cynical and brilliant lyrics, the song reveals the true woman behind the facade and Lansbury surpasses every bit of magic that she's shown prior to this. The star role is a tour-de-force for any actress, and she handles it brilliantly.

Zan Charisse makes a charming Louise - a gauche teenager who changes before our eyes into a glamorous Gypsy Rose Lee. The role of Baby June as a small child is performed by vivacious precocity, and Debbie Bowen with her platinum hair, so in keeping with the period, looks remarkably like her as a teenager. Barrie Ingham does well with the thankless role of Herbie, and the youngster playing Tulsa, Andrew Norman, has the difficult number 'All I Need Is The Girl', and handles both song and dance with great ease.



Zan Charisse (left) plays 'Louise', Angela Lansbury (right) excels as 'Rose'.

The show's score includes **Everything's Coming Up Roses**, **Some People, Small World, Together, Wherever We Go**, **If Momma Was Married**, and **Let Me Entertain You**, and in case anyone thought I'd forgotten, **You Gotta Have A Gimmick**, performed by three talented and highly amusing strippers, Valerie Walsh, Kelly Wilson and Judy Cannon.

It will be quite a while before the London theatre gets the chance to see a better musical or a star quite as magnificent as Angela Lansbury.

Barry Conley

# And Now For Something Completely Live

HOWEVER much one would like to believe that My Lords Argyle and Melford Stevens wear sequined bras and panties under their judicial robes, it is something that only really happens in the crazy world of Monty Python (I think). When a minister "goes to pieces" during an interview, there is seldom an assistant with a cardboard box to pick up the pieces quite so literally: first one foot then the other, a leg, a knee till eventually the interviewer is left talking to a carton of anatomical spares. But such lunacy is typical of the Flying Circus which wound up its first live tour at the Theatre Royal, Norwich.

As with everything they do, the emphasis was on speed. The first hour passed in what seemed like twenty minutes, with live sketches interspersed with film clips and Terry Gilliam's amazing graphics. A guerrilla group from Time Out armed the audience for the second half with noise-makers of every description, and passed around festive streamers to give the whole glorious affair a party atmosphere. But, in truth, nothing more than the Monty Python team was needed to render the (young) audience helpless with laughter.

Several of the well known TV (television) sketches were on parade, the Ministry of Silly Walks, Nudge Nudge, The Deceased Parrot, and each one as fresh as on first acquaintance. It is satisfying to find that their humour is versatile enough to work in yet another medium.

So what about their next television series? John Cleese is still dead against it. "We've done three already. It wouldn't prove anything doing another. There are so many other things we could be doing, in books, records, films and so on. And I think the others are beginning to see my point."

Did they enjoy performing live in theatres? Eric Idle: "It was alright at first, but you're doing the same material night after night and in the end all you're trying to do is get the same laughs in the same places as you did the night before. A bit louder perhaps!"

So what plans have they got for the future? Terry Jones: "Well after tonight we have a week off before going to Canada for a three week tour. I don't know what will happen when we get back. A great void opens up. Perhaps I'll go to bed."

And a final comment from Graham Chapman: "Goodnight everyone."

Say no more. Know what I mean?

Michael Mason



Keith Michell as Robert Browning, Geraldine McEwan as Elizabeth Barrett.

# Love Letters

**DEAR LOVE** at the Comedy Theatre, Panton Street, London W1

LOVE and romance as depicted in today's films and plays is quite often a sordid affair. How refreshing therefore, to be reminded of the days when romance was much more than a 'hit and run' affair, by escaping for a few hours into the world of Elizabeth and Robert Browning.

Jerome Kilty has devised an enchanting evening in the theatre, by using some parts of the 520 letters exchanged between them during their courtship and eventual marriage. The lyrical poetry to be found in their long exchange of letters is a joy to listen to.

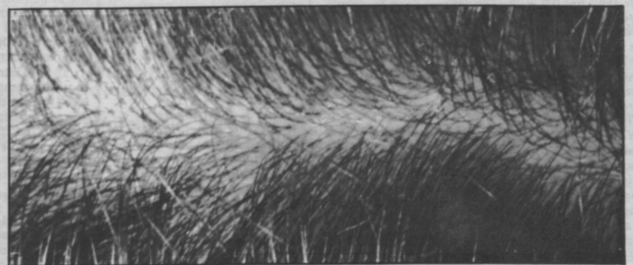
The presence of the unseen Mr Barrett, Elizabeth's tyrannical father, hangs over the proceedings, as they discuss his reactions to Browning's daily visits to Elizabeth.

As Elizabeth, Geraldine McEwan captures the early shyness prior to their meeting, and we watch her fears increasing as the day of their elopement draws near, then gradually turning to confident and mature womanhood after their marriage. It is a splendidly controlled performance with many comic moments, particularly when she describes the adventures that befall her when she goes to reclaim her stolen dog.

Keith Mitchell who played Robert Browning previously in the musical 'Robert and Elizabeth', once again gives the young and ardent poet all the dash and charm we would expect.

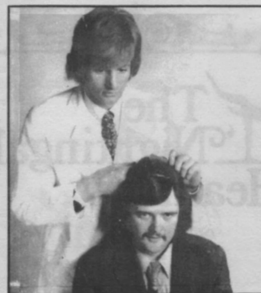
Barry Conley

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# Instant Nostalgia

**BOBBY SHORT IS MAD ABOUT NOEL COWARD** - Atlantic K 60037 - (2 record set. Price £3.49)

With so many recordings of songs by the late NOEL COWARD floating around, may I commend to you one of the finest - titled **BOBBY SHORT IS MAD ABOUT NOEL COWARD**, Bobby is a popular singer-pianist who is beloved by cafe society in New York. He began his recording career for Atlantic Records in the mid 50's, and has always concentrated on singing as many unknown songs by famous and lesser known composers as he has the more well known ones. He is quite definitely an acquired taste, and rather than rack my brains to describe him, I will use the remark made to me by a friend, when I first played Short's record to her - "he sounds like a coloured Noel Coward". His diction is flawless, his feeling for the lyrics admirable, and if you'll forgive the very noticeable vibrato in his voice, then you are in for a highly enjoyable time.

The well known Coward songs include 'I'll See You Again', 'Poor Little Rich Girl', 'Someday I'll Find You', 'Room With A View' and 'Nina'. One particular item of interest is the inclusion of Cole Porter's song 'Let's Fly Away' with specially written Coward lyrics commenting on England during the last war. The records also include quite a few lesser known songs, such as 'Something To Do With Spring', 'The Younger Generation' (a very early Coward

song), and the cynical 'World Weary'. If you happen to hear one track played on the radio, and enjoy it, then go ahead and buy the double album - you won't be disappointed.

Barry Conley

# Musical Anthology

**THE ME NOBODY KNOWS** - Shaw Theatre, Euston Road, London.

Stephen Joseph's collection of the writings of New York ghetto to kids published as 'The Me Nobody Knows', looked stark and uncompromising on the printed page. But, set to music, and translated somewhat unconvincingly from American into English, the words had little or no impact, when one could hear them.

The stage set was lifted from 'West Side Story' and over-painted with the names of British football teams. There were no really strong performances from the cast, and though Peter Straker and Pamela Doermeyer clearly have talent, they were either badly directed or had no sympathy for their roles.

With no story line, one might have looked for strong characterisation but there was little evidence of any. And even the music as performed was not strong enough to carry the show (though mention should be made of a fascinating number called Fugue for Four Girls).

It was a show one felt sorry for, rather than detested. But it was so far from the original spirit of the kids' writing, that one cannot help but feel disappointment.

Michael Mason







Edward and Edwina Lionheart (Vincent Price and Diana Rigg) silence for good a critical critic.

## Bloody Critics

**THEATRE OF BLOOD** (United Artists). Stars Vincent Price, Diana Rigg, Robert Morley, Jack Hawkins, Ian Hendry, Harry Andrews, Coral Brown, Milo O'Shea, Eric Sykes, Diana Dors, Dennis Price. Director: Douglas Hickox. Script: Anthony Greville-Bell.

A wonderful cast obviously had a ball turning a witty, very hip script into one of the year's funniest films. It strongly echoes Ronald Coleman's Academy Award winner 'A Double Life', but this one is comedy all the way. The plot has some gaping holes, but these holes become part

of the fun of the exercise as Vincent Price systematically murders a circle of critics who have panned him during his career as a Shakespearean actor. The critics have names such as 'Hector Snipe', and each reaches an equally fitting demise.

Robert Morley, pink-suited with two white poodles, is predictably hilarious, as is Diana Dors in her one-minute cameo. Vincent Price, camping it up through several characters from Shylock to Butch the Hairdresser, is a dream. Anyone who even vaguely enjoys high-theatrics should love this one.

Stephen MacLean



A loving moment for two of the long-suffering emigrants.

## The New World Dream

**THE EMIGRANTS.** Stars — Max von Sydow, Liv Ullman. Directed, photographed and edited by Jan Troell. Distributor — Columbia/Warner Distributors Ltd.

The thought of a 2½ hour film at 10.30am didn't thrill me very much. Added to that, the fact of it having sub-titles, and knowing it was Swedish, I assumed rightly that I was in for a heavy time of it. However, something happened about 15 minutes into the film — I became involved. By the time the film had ended I was fully occupied with this saga of a group of Swedes emigrating to America in the last century.

Everything bad that can occur seems to befall the farmer hero and his wife and family. Their crop fails, their barn catches fire and burns to the ground, and the wife watches helplessly as her child dies from a sudden illness. Together with the farmer's younger brother (a lovely study from newcomer Eddie Axberg) and a group of peasants fleeing persecution for their religious beliefs, the party boards a ship for America and a new life. On board, the fates

are still against them, as the wife discovers lice in her clothes and several of the emigrants die during the long voyage.

When they land in New York, the faces of the travellers are full of wonderment at what they see and hear. The youngster's attempts at enquiries in a foreign tongue are both pathetic and funny. They then begin the long journey across country by train and riverboat until they finally reach their destination in the woods of Minnesota. The beautiful expression of contentment on the face of the farmer as he stakes his claim on new land, brings the picture to a close.

Director Jan Troell also handled the photography, and with stars of the calibre of Max von Sydow and Liv Ullman to assist him, he was halfway to success before he began. The plight of sub-titled films in this country is one of mixed reaction from the public, but I do urge you to see this minor masterpiece. The final credits announce that a sequel will be coming shortly, and I for one will await it eagerly.

Barry Conley

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## Newsletters

### GLF Announces Gay Pride Week

**LONDON:** A disco planned for the Hanover Arms, Clapham Road, South London on Saturday June 23rd will be the opener for a Gay Pride week planned by the Gay Liberation Front.

Sunday will be a Gay Day (venue undecided); Tuesday, a general meeting and West London disco; Wednesday, a South London meeting; Thursday, several local meetings; Friday, a disco planned for outdoors.

The week will wind up on Saturday, June 30th, with a picnic, dance and demo/march. A lot of participation will be needed to make this the success it should be – and it should be fun too, so those interested can ring GLF on 01-837 7174 for further information.

### Pub Bans 'Queers'

**LEEDS:** GN reader John Mibbs reports that the management of the Great Northern Hotel, who have presumably made substantial money from gays, have begun to show their true colours.

Recently the Buccaneer Bar of the hotel, frequented by many gays, was closed for re-decoration. "The regulars moved to the York Bar at the back of the hotel", John explains. "The manager positioned himself at the door, and anyone he recognised he told 'Sorry, we can't serve you, we don't want queers in here'. The same kind of thing happened a couple of years ago, and someone wrote to a member of the Board of the House Of Forte, which owns the hotel, and a representative came up and removed the manager, if I remember correctly."

### Sex Discrimination Law Rejected

**NEW YORK:** Intro 475, a Bill which would outlaw discrimination on the basis of 'sexual orientation' has failed to be introduced to this city's Human Rights Law, despite the fact that 10 of the 15 members pledged in writing to support it.

The Bill was defeated when a third vote was taken, and the many gay New Yorkers who waited outside City Hall for nearly five hours in a chilly rainstorm did not receive the news too happily.

**■ The Pressure of Oppressed Gay Love**  
**NORTHAMPTON:** Derek Williams, 29, had planned to murder Paul Tippett, 26, whom he had loved since schooldays, then commit suicide, a jury was told.

However, the prosecuting QC said he was no longer asking the jury to find the accused guilty of attempted murder: "His love for Paul Tippett is something which you and I may find difficult to understand and something of which we may disapprove, but it was something real enough for him. It was not just friendship."

Although he may have disapproved, the prosecuting QC became almost romantic when he said: "It is not difficult to understand how the idea appealed to him that although they could not be together in this life, their souls might be in union in the next life." He also added that the accused had not come close enough to killing Tippett for the charge to be warranted.

William's defence claimed that although he had many opportunities to attack Tippett with the knife he was brandishing, this had not occurred. Williams himself told the court he had gone to Tippett's house because of a burning desire to tell him that his mother had been wrong in ending their association because there was nothing "nasty or dirty about it."

*Proceedings continue.*

### ■ Thirty Quid For One Pssts

**LONDON:** Robert Bence, 28, has been fined £20 with £10 costs for 'obstructing the police'. Although he denied it, police charged that Bence allegedly gave close inspection to two policemen hiding behind a tree, watching two men 'talking closely'. He walked by and then returned, telling the two men "Psst, police."

"Police have a difficult enough job without someone like you taking a hand," the magistrate admonished. GN would be more inclined to think that police have a difficult enough job without hiding behind trees watching men talking. Caught any murderers lately, fellas?

### ■ Monty Python in Scotland

**EDINBURGH:** So successful was the Monty Python Tour here that three days' performances were given to packed King's Theatre audiences in May. The local gay community responded by holding a party at which Graham Chapman and Tom Wall were guests of honour. We enjoyed their company and loved the show: "haste ye back, lads, ye've won our hearts."

### ■ Gay Wedding Televised

**COPENHAGEN:** A wedding between two gay women has been telecast live by a Danish TV network here. Broadcast as part of a series called *Prejudices*, the wedding – performed by a Danish Church minister – went to air unannounced. An action-filled debate followed the wedding (Danish law forbids gay marriages), resulting in a decision by two political parties – the Socialist Peoples' Party and Radical Leftists Party – to pledge support towards legalised gay marriages.

### ■ Gays Shock Oxford Chums

**OXFORD:** The Cherwell Ball, planned by Old Etonian Robert Lyle and his Oxford chums for Friday June 1, was cancelled when the organisers received what appears to have been a nasty shock. Most of the tickets were ordered by GLF members – "They were trying to infiltrate themselves into it," was the way Ball treasurer Keith Hutchen put it.

A would-be infiltrator and Gay Libber named David received the news by saying "we enjoy a good dance as much as anybody."

GN felt that the NUS, currently campaigning for gay equality on campus, might be interested in this news and has passed it along.

### ■ "Church Fathered Gay Lib"

**EDINBURGH:** The Rev David Levison, convener of the Moral Welfare Committee, has blamed Church attitudes for the necessity of Gay Lib. "No-one at all, because the Church exists, should have to carry alone a burden of guilt and loneliness and oppression, the burden of having to live a double life because he or she knows how most people react to the open admission of such a condition."

The church liberalism was tempered with the belief that "the normality of heterosexuality should be stressed."

### ■ Widening Gulf Between Gays

**NEW YORK:** It's highly likely that the Lesbian Liberation Committee of the Gay Activists Alliance will soon split. Recent meetings have produced the opinion from many gay women that they should align with an organisation devoted exclusively to gay women's rights – and that lesbians are concerned not only with gay rights, but with their rights as women.

### ■ No People Like Show People ....

**NEW YORK:** Joanne Woodward's latest agony-epic movie, currently being filmed in a rented apartment, has her playing the mother of a gay boy whom she discovers naked in the arms of his lover beneath a Rudolph Nureyev poster. Of the movie ("Death of a Snow Queen" although the title will probably be changed), Joanne says, "It's very depressing; and just between you and me, I have just about had it with being depressed."

Jonathan King, in the States to promote his new record label, is promising an album for later this year called 'Bubblem Gum Rock Is Here To Stay', featuring such kiddie tracks as 'Supershit' and 'Be Gay'.

And here's a lulu from Little Richard, of the bouffant hairdo and thickening pancake, re David Bowie: "I heard about David, I never met David, but I heard that he's some kind of homosexual. Personally I don't believe that. I don't believe that no man who's homosexual would sit down and declare that he's homosexual." And: "I think homosexuality is just like if a man was born deformed. Like a crooked finger, a one-eye, no eyes. I don't know David, but I wish him that. I want him to hit the world and smash everywhere, but I really believe that David is straight, I hope."

### ■ CHE Throws An Open Gathering

**LONDON:** CHE are in need of cash, and this fact was laid on the line at an open meeting held June 1st. The running of the London CHE office on a shoestring budget brought a general request for aid: those able to spend some time in running the office affairs were asked to fill in a form left in the foyer.

The breakaway of CENTRE from CHE's gay befriending and counselling service, FRIEND, was glossed over somewhat, but the strong need for gay sex instruction in secondary schools was met head-on. CHE members resolved to attempt to arrange interviews with the appropriate school authorities.

CHE have long been hoping to open a club venue, comprising a regular disco with space set aside for other activities. The hold-up on establishing the club is still that old perennial, "lack of funds"; one visitor suggested a regular contribution scaled to each individual's salary, and this suggestion met with general acceptance. Current membership fee is £1.50 per annum.

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