

March 75

Chimaera

Nottingham & Derby C.H.E. Newsletter

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The National Federation Of Homofile Organisations.

NOTTINGHAM & DERBY CHE NEWSLETTER

EDITORIAL

I see from the programme that another year has flashed by and AGM time is upon us once again. I look forward to seeing you all there, keenly voting in your committee for next year.

At this point I'm sitting on a small boat in the River Ouse at Ely having a great struggle with my conscience. The choice is twofold, the issue in question black and white. Do I finish my masterpiece and then leg it to the Cutter Inn, or do I leave my pen in the corner and go straight to the aforesaid pub? You may think we're mad to go boating during the first week in March. At times so do I; especially as condensation from the bulkhead (ceiling to you) proves our major problem. But it is very pleasant and peaceful, in spite of the drips.

We contest right of way with the swans and the Cambridge eight busily practising for the boat race. It's not them we object to, but the busy little launch filled with elderly gentlemen in faded blue caps and scarves who are too well educated to take any notice of the signs saying '3 mph speed limit'. Their wash could be nasty at tea time.

The boat has all mod.cons. including refrigerator and TV and a compact, built-in loo, which asserts its superiority now and again by splashing back up to great heights when you think you've finished flushing the damn thing - my face isn't the most washed part of my anatomy this week.

I would still recommend it as a good holiday. You can always go for a swim if you're bored, or run aground; or go for a walk if you need the exercise and can manage to moor. You can even go through the locks sooner or later, but this can be more traumatic than mooring, especially when other people stand watching with a hardly concealed grin from ear to ear.

Canals must be easier than rivers - you don't have to contend with currents as well. The boatyard do sell you handy little booklets though, if you don't let them fall into the river. The mud at the bank there was pretty deep and smelly too. Carole says that it wasn't as smelly as the mud she was in as she heroically leaped overboard to pull us off the mud bank she'd steered us on to! Quite interesting that - the guy we'd turned round to help ended up helping me to haul her back on board. She has some magnificent bruises as a result. Enough of our restful holiday; it's past opening time!

See you at the A.G.M.

Heather

 PROGRAMME

 MARCH

Friday 14th SOCIAL at LA CHIC from 9 pm.
The address is 5-13, Canal Street, Nottingham.

Wednesday 19th GARRICK EVENING in Derby from 8 pm.

Friday 21st ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING. 8 pm.
The meeting is at the Friend's Meeting House, 25, Clarendon St., Nottingham. Any nominations for your committee for 1975/76 will be taken and voted on tonight. If you care about the future of the group prove it by being at this meeting.

N.B. At our last meeting at the Friends Meeting House we arrived to find the front door locked. If the same happens this evening, please remember that you can get in by the side door on the right of the building.

We will probably be going on to one of the clubs afterwards.

Wednesday 26th National Housewives Register Meeting.

We have already had one successful meeting with the East Leake branch of this organisation and this evening a few of us will be travelling to Mansfield to meet the group there. A maximum of 8 people will be going to represent us, so after the committee that still leaves room for 2 or 3 others. If you are interested, contact any committee member.

 APRIL

Wednesday 2nd WALLACE GREVATT, E.C. member responsible for all local groups will be giving us some ideas which have proved successful in other areas. The meeting is at the Friends Meeting House, NOTTINGHAM and begins at 8 pm. (Rooms 3/4)

Friday 4th COFFEE EVENING at CAROLE'S. From 8 pm.
The address is 41, Middleton Street, Beeston, Nottingham. And afterwards on to a club, if you feel up to it.

Wednesday 9th GARRICK EVENING in Derby from 8 pm.

Friday 11th SOCIAL at LA CHIC from 9 pm.
This meeting is for the guys. For the girls there is a social at GREEN LANE HOUSE Derby.

Tuesday 15th NATIONAL HOUSEWIVES REGISTER meeting.

This time we're going to speak to the group in Bingham. The situation is the same as that for the previous meeting, so if you are interested, contact any committee member.

Friday 18th COFFEE EVENING at Ian and David's from 8 pm.
The address is 64, Fabis Drive, Clifton Grove, Nottingham. The energetic ones amongst us will be off to a club afterwards.

 PROGRAMME (Continued)

APRIL

Wednesday 23rd GARRICK Evening in Derby. From 8 pm.

Saturday 26th INTER-GROUP SOCIAL at MARIO'S from 9 pm.

All the local Midlands groups will be invited.

Wednesday 30th BUSINESS MEETING and DISCUSSION. 8 pm.

This will take place at the PEOPLE'S CENTRE (upstairs), 33, Mansfield Road, NOTTINGHAM. Coffee will be available. Talk about the group, or any subject you care to raise - but why don't we talk about sex?

MAY

Saturday 3rd SOCIAL EVENING at MARIO'S from 9 pm.

Wednesday 7th GARRICK Evening in Derby from 8 pm.

Friday 16th SOCIAL EVENING at La Chic from 9 pm.

Saturday 24th PARTY at MARTIN'S from 9 pm.

The address is 28, Gordon Road, West Bridgford, NOTTINGHAM. Bring a bottle.

There should be a meeting with the Ashby NHR during the week beginning May 11th - but at time of writing they have not confirmed the date. The same situation applies as for the other meetings, so if any of you are interested in joining us, then let us know and we will tell you if and when the date has been settled.

Remember, you can get in touch with any of the committee, or send your contributions or letters to the newsletter via our Post Office Box

Nottingham and Derby CHE
P.O.Box 87,
Derby,
DE1 1EN.

 HAPPENINGS

The 10th Night Party at Howard's was highly successful. So successful in fact that not-too-latecomers only found lettuce leaves to munch. Thank you, Howard, for being a lovely host, and you David, for being the music man.

Speaking of David, his music quiz for morons left me in no doubt where I stand. It was a very pleasant coffee evening with a large proportion of morons like myself chewing pencils, madly guessing simple musical questions.

TAO, represented by Layla and Brooklyn, gave a lot of us very tough food for thought. The main comments in the Garrick afterwards comprised variations on 'My God, I'll never think I'm persecuted as a homosexual after hearing what transexuals have to endure!' Thank you both for opening our eyes to the lonely struggles that most of you go through to reach your goal of surgery. Right on with your campaign brother and sister!

Our meeting with members of the Social Services was one of our better discussion evenings. 2 Counsellors, 2 Probation officers, 1 Doctor and a few nurses were among the group. We are hoping to arrange at least one more of these in a future programme having been asked to do so by Yvonne Bishop (Project Worker and Secretary - Personal Problems in the Community Committee).

The Valentine Party at Wheathills turned out to be a smashing success. When I remember our first parties with one or two girls in a room full of guys it seems quite incredible. Wheathills was packed with roughly equal numbers all enjoying themselves dancing, drinking and talk talk talking. Once again David was the music master, but this time the girls decided to deal with the food. Thank you Cara, Gerry, Christa and Cherry for the trouble you took. It was worth it.

 WOMEN'S MEETINGS

We now have meetings every two weeks. The second Friday in every month is a social and chat evening in the private side room of the Green Lane House in the centre of Derby. (The same room is open every Saturday night to all gay people who care to go along.)

The fourth Tuesday in each month we aim to have discussion meetings at the Women's Centre in Nottingham. These are taking a bit longer to get off the ground, but should prove worthwhile when they do.

Our meeting with the Women's Lib group forged a few more common bonds and assurances of support where possible from both sides of the discussion group. I hope they will invite us to help them with some of their specific campaigns as I'm beginning to feel tied within the beginnings of a ghetto only working for specifically gay causes.

 WOMEN'S MEETINGS (Continued)

There are so many areas that indirectly affect us in their oppressive ways where I hope our support would be welcomed. As everyone in the group must know by now, I have this particular bee in my bonnet about educating the world into accepting us and also one about educating us into accepting the world - with a few suitable changes of course.

I would like to see more of the women who read this turning up for the Nottingham meetings because I know how excellent they are at socials and boozing, but I don't know how good they are at sorting out aims and ideas.

Heather

 MWAP

A few months ago I thought that MAWP was either a Brazilian flying squirrel straight from Call My Bluff or a typing error. I have finally inclined to the latter point of view after reading a communication from MAWP in which the spelling mistakes spread across the page faster than the green slime from Doctor Who. I quote a few incredible, but nonetheless genuine examples below:-

For instance, I kwon that ex-secertary Howarth Penny got up to quite a few things, but even I was surprised to hear that he spent most of his time stroggling away - not just resting on his lorrels (or on his bottem, would you belive?)

Could CSS Stationey be some far-flung halt eagerly awaiting the arrival of a dispatchment of 'Nice to be Necrophilic' badges from Manchesterey Picadilly? Needles to say it only referred to the group treasurers' forms sent in a Jiffy Bag, which could be recycled by unpicking the stables - and if you can't manage that with a screwdriver, then try a pair of spurs.

I wondered whether 'Anxios' might be a deposed Greek Colonel. Whoever he is, he is obviously a very over-worked MAWP, since it was Anxios getting the first memo out to treasurers - and in his hurry he mitted the date, for which he haas apologised.

Quite rightly, we are all reminded that CHE cannot exist on fresh air. Therfor don't leave renewang your subscrption until the last minu, or your membership will lapes.

 CAMPAIGNING: 1. THE BISHOP LONSDALE TEACH-IN

On Wednesday January 22nd, Bishop Lonsdale College of Education in Derby held its second teach-in on homosexuality. The theme was Homosexuality in Education and the speakers were David Dancer (President of Trent Park Students Union); Liz Stanley (CHE Executive Committee member) and Bernard Rattigan (Student Counsellor from Loughborough University).

The CHE group supported the evening with their presence (and painting up a few posters beforehand) but full credit goes to the college's gay rights representative and local CHE member, Christine Popplewell, for organisation.

Liz gave a very detailed talk about the differences between biological sex and gender role playing. She explained how society and education enforced ideas of how each sex should behave and literally what a load of rubbish it was.

Bernard followed by explaining how, in his work as a counsellor, he was often faced by people who were unhappy about the sexual and societal role into which they were being pressured. He was very critical of the medical profession's attitudes, which convinced homosexuals that they were ill and needed to see doctors. This raised questions about what aversion therapy was and the sheer brutality and uselessness of it was explained to them.

David Dancer talked about the difficulties facing gay teachers and the need to keep the N.U.S. and teaching unions aware. He expressed the need for positive action rather than paper mandates and urged students, whatever their own sexual orientation, to support the gay rights movement.

At the end, the three speakers were asked to answer one question: "What would you say to a fifteen year old in school who came to you and said that she or he was in love with her or his best friend - bearing in mind, of course, that the relationship was homosexual.?"

David replied that he would feel bound, if it were a boy, to explain the legal problems he would have to face.

Bernard's response was that if a fifteen year old could be that positive, he or she had no problem!

Liz just said that she would say "Good - in fact, very good."

It was a shame that the discussion had to be ended promptly at 10 pm, but even in that short time allotted an immense amount of ground was covered. Information which I am sure will be of great benefit to every sexual being that was there.

Hilary Stafford

(Nottingham and Derby CHE)

 CAMPAIGNING: 2. THE NATIONAL HOUSEWIVES REGISTER

The name may mean as little to you as it did to me, but on February 7th a group of us went to meet the East Leake branch of the above organisation.

It appears to be an alternative to the Women's Institute and Mother's Union, with large membership and numerous groups throughout the country. I for one was most impressed by the whole thing. The meetings are held in private houses, much as with our coffee and discussion evenings, but on this occasion the living room was jammed and the open plan stairs were filled to overflowing. Geoff and Tony had come with us for the first time and found the evening very warm and stimulating. Ian and Hilary opened the evening with a few introductory remarks about CHE's aims nationally and locally and the discussion began from there.

Two hours later we called a halt and an hour after that individual conversations were still going strongly. It was a great shame to break off at this point, but obviously we got through to them as they sent us a very useful donation to National CHE to help us in our aims.

We have more meetings with other branches of the NHR (see Programme) and if anyone wants to join us on these forays, please let us know. It's great fun when there are a group of us and it's very good for self-identification within CHE.

 CAMPAIGNING: 3. DERBY SAMARITANS

On the 16th February Ian and myself took part in a one day seminar on the invitation of Derby Samaritans. To open up the two and a half hour discussion we distributed the new "Everything you wanted to know about Homosexuality" leaflet and gave a brief outline of what CHE and its aims are.

Instead of formal rows, we formed a large circle and answered many questions, comments, criticisms and the usual type of myths that are levelled at us at this kind of meeting.

The 40 Samaritans were given the opportunity to see copies of Gay News and they informed us of the different homosexual 'problems' that people came to them with. The entire discussion was varied and covered an enormous amount of ground, not only on homosexuality, but on societal attitudes to sexuality and relationships in general.

A rewarding and valuable experience for everyone.

Hilary.

 A ROSE IS A ROSE IS A ROLES RUSE

Role playing extends far beyond the confines of male/female sexism. Advertisers frequently attempt to graft glamour on to a mundane product by associating it with an exciting or exotic life style. Would cigarettes still weave their seductive charms if, instead of being cool as a mountain stream, they were cold as a frozen haddock.

How would "Schwarzkopf's" beauty preparations fare if translated into "Blackhead's". Or, for that matter, "Charles of the Ritz" as "Albert of Seaview"?

It was recently suggested in the Guardian that aggressiveness on the highways might be tempered by providing cars with more placid names. Thus we might tame the drivers of Avengers, Scimitars, Victors and Rapiers if we rechristened their cars as the Chrysler Doughnut, the Sunbeam Toupee, the Austin Woodworm or the Vauxhall Grape. Indeed, we already have the homely Volkswagen Beetle - why not give it the companionship of the Fiat Cockroach or the Datsun Bedbug?

As a living example I can relate the story of a pleasant enough young lad called Martin Jones whose personality was transformed overnight. His widowed mother married a Pole who insisted on changing her son's name to Tadeusz Krakozcynskyj.

 FRIEND

In the last issue of the newsletter I gave my views on the November FRIEND conference and FRIEND in general.

A lot has come out of that conference already and change is now apparent within FRIEND. I should like this time to say what is happening both nationally and locally. It is locally where you as members of CHE can be of enormous help to other gays, but I will enlarge on that later.

Nationally:-

1) The working party of six people (resulting from the Nov. FRIEND conference) will be getting together soon to examine the replies to the questionnaire on what should be the criteria for choosing befrienders.

2) The members of the CHE Women's Campaign are producing a draft 'befriending kit'. The original intention being for the befriending of women. It became apparent from the draft that it was information needed by all befrienders regardless of the sex of the person they were befriending. FRIEND will be financing the production of the kit. By the time this is printed in the newsletter the kit will probably be ready.

3) There is to be a new National FRIEND management committee which will be starting work very soon.

 FRIEND (Continued)

4) The meeting that resulted from the Nottingham Conference resolution took place in London on January 18th. It has been adequately reported in Gay News, but the direction for future development of befriending is clearly one of self learning and self help.

5) On March 22nd in Manchester there is to be a working conference on the selection of women befrienders. The discussion groups planned are worthy of mention at this point:-

- What is befriending?
- Coming out - how important is it for befrienders to come out?
- Is sex a part of befriending?
- Befriending as campaigning.
- Is befriending a group or individual activity?

Locally

Here we have never had an officially recognised group. In fact we have been known as the East Midlands blind spot on the National FRIEND map for a long time. Truth is that it has not been blind at all. Over the past two years we have made and kept good, solid contacts with individuals in the social services, other CHE groups, gay contact groups such as Gay Switchboard and Icebreakers and a number of individuals working in the probation and counselling services. The referrals that have come to us through these agencies, through National FRIEND and through the Samaritans have, I hope, been adequately helped by those of us who have been the initial contact and later by the support of the local group members.

Every new member has been met by members of the committee and I personally have kept up correspondence contact with those who cannot for various reasons attend meetings - in a few instances between one and two years. This kind of contact is very important and a way in which group members can help a FRIEND group even if they cannot or do not wish to be 'official' befrienders.

Altogether, a lot of people have come to us without advertising. This way the few people really involved have not been worked beyond their own mental and physical resources and people have been helped properly. The work of a befriender can be both valuable and rewarding. One thing it most definitely is is hard work, requiring time, patience, responsibility and above all a positive commitment. Where you are helping someone who will initially rely on you for trust friendship and acceptance the commitment is not a light one. What you are doing is literally helping someone to help themselves - whatever their age, job, colour, religion etc. Giving them the personal and group friendship we ourselves have gained through the group. This requires befrienders who accept people for the people that they are with as little of the befriender and 'case' relationship as possible.

FRIEND (Continued)

I am hoping that in the next six months, when National action and direction have been clarified, that there will be a FRIEND group in the Nottingham/Derby area. We already have some of the necessary back-up resources, but there is still a lot of work to be done both in that area and the actual "training" of befrienders. What we need is a good team of people to work together to widen the present limited amount of work that we can cope with.

This does not mean you have to be already professionally trained or qualified in this kind of work. If you are interested, then please get in touch with me via the P.O.Box address. I can also provide anyone with details of the March 22nd conference.

Hilary

AVERSION THERAPY

Over the years the psychiatrist and clinical psychologist have devised a whole armoury of 'aversion therapy' methods. It would be impossible to describe the details of even a small number of these in the space provided, so I will confine myself to a brief description of only two of the various methods of which I have some professional experience. Also, I make apologies to the gay women who read this for assuming that the person involved is always a male. Aversion therapy has been used on women, but it is certainly not as widespread, and I personally have little experience of it.

Perhaps I ought to say at the outset that it has been shown by various research workers that there is no significant difference in the response to most of the methods used.

In "Classical Conditioning" the patient is asked to select a number of slides of nude men that he finds sexually attractive. The slides are then shown to him for an interval of about 10 seconds and during the final second of each exposure, and for a few seconds following it, the patient receives a painful electric shock. The shock is usually administered by means of two electrodes placed on the thigh of the patient.

The other method is called "Avoidance Conditioning" In this the patient is again asked to select a number of slides of nude men together with a selection of nude women he finds sexually interesting. The patient is then shown the slide of the man he found least attractive from his selection. he is then instructed to leave the slide on as long as he finds it attractive. If, after a 10 second interval, he has still not removed the slide, he receives a painful electric shock. The shock is continued with increasing strength until he removes the slide.

 AVERSION THERAPY (Continued)

When the patient avoids the shock for three times in succession he is placed on a schedule of "reinforcement". Again with the same slide shown repeatedly after a short interval he is told that there is an equal chance of him not receiving the shock after the interval, receiving the shock if he removes the slide and receiving the shock whilst not being able to remove the slide. On some occasions following the removal of the male slide he is shown one of the woman he found attractive. When he no longer has a sexual response to the male slide it is changed to the next one in the series and the whole procedure is then repeated.

The response to the various slides is usually assessed by reported changes in sexual feeling and volume change in the penis.

For follow-up purposes patients are usually classified at the outset of treatment on a 1 to 10 scale, depending on the degree of previous homosexual behaviour. Grade 1 would be someone with only minimal sexual experience and grade 10 would be someone who had enjoyed anal intercourse.

As I stated before, there appears to be little difference in the 'effectiveness' of the various forms of therapy; it also appears that all are equally incapable of maintaining the conditioned changes over any prolonged length of time (5-10 years) without some form of "topping up" treatment. Little work has been done on these follow up trials but those works that have been published show that almost all patients will return eventually to their original sexual orientation level. This final level may vary according to any reinforcement therapy or measures that might encourage better heterosexual adjustments.

In conclusion, I find it essential that I make a few personal comments on this controversial subject. I hope I have so far given a purely clinical objective presentation. On the whole I think aversion therapy for homosexuals is wrong. But there are occasions when a patient after encouragement from psychiatrists, GP, social worker etc., to accept his gayness as just one of the variations of the sexual norm will find this impossible. If he is then adamant that aversion therapy is what he wants, then he should be allowed to try it and every effort should be made by all concerned to make it successful. However, as many have said before me, I hope that one day society will get itself re-orientated so that it accepted all its members without qualification.

A Doctor.

 THE COMBINED SUBSCRIPTION SCHEME

Some members of the group have quite understandably remarked that they wish the amount of their subscription to be a private matter and therefore are sending it directly to Manchester. Can we please ask those people who renew in this manner to simply let us know when they renewed - we can then chase up any delays or errors at the Manchester office.

 THE ADVENTURES OF SUPERPUFF

SUPERPUFF AND THE WEREWOLF MYSTERY

Part 1: Groins in the night.

"With one mighty bound he was by her side. She felt his hot breath upon her neck and trembled uncontrollably as he savagely tore off the silken black negligee. She groaned and surrendered her young body to his crushing embrace.

'You little devil, you temptress; at last you are mine!' Sir Nigel cast aside his riding crop and laid her down upon the leopard-skin rug where she could see the firelight flickering upon the high vaulted ceiling of the great hall. She trembled once more as he drew his riding cloak about her."

Chuck Bold closed the leather bound volume with evident satisfaction. "It would hardly be stretching a point to say that this is Gloria Pudenda's finest work. "An epic saga of unbridled passion and one man's search for his own identity" as Miss Mildew at the library so aptly described it."

Nick Smooth uncoiled himself from the lotus position and climbed down from the top of the book case. He looked mildly surprised at the evident intensity of Miss Mildew's language - a lady not usually given to excesses of any kind. "And you read it perfectly, dearheart."

Chuck Bold drew the lad towards him and looked at his unblemished features as if for the first time. "You noticed, of course, its striking resemblance to my own work: "Invertebrates of the Indus Valley"?"

Nick Smooth unfastened a couple of buttons and insinuated his hand inside Chuck Bold's silken shirt and began to nibble his ear like a rabbit with a lettuce leaf. "Huh huh. And although I always thought you tended to overdo the symbolism, I would count it a book unjustly underrated in literary circles." He sank his teeth into Chuck Bold's shoulder. A Nobel prize and the front row on the magazine stand at W.H.Smith's is the least you deserve. Just think of it, nestling snugly between the Radio Times and the Railway Modeller; the distillation of one of the world's great minds and source of untold delight to millions."

Nick Smooth's arm almost disappeared from view inside the shirt and Chuck Bold's eyes had assumed a glazed appearance. His toes began to curl up like burnt toast and he had begun to emit a low, inhuman groan when there came a sharp, staccato rap on the front door.

Nick Smooth ceased to do whatever it was that he had been doing and withdrew his hand. Chuck Bold sighed and began to adjust his dress as Grudge - ancient and treacherous retainer of the Chateau Gloom shuffled into the room.

"There be an 'uman to see thee Master Bold."

Chuck Bold's eyebrows rose slightly. "An 'uman? You mean a woman?"

"Arr my dears, and one worthy of the name, with hips for the child-bearing an' thighs that could crack walnuts."



SUPERPUFF

.... AND THE MYSTERY
OF THE WEREWOLF

 THE ADVENTURES OF SUPERPUFF (Continued)

He drooled lasciviously from the corner of his mouth and his eyes rolled about as he recalled the fading memory of past lust in the dust beneath tropic stars.

"He'll have to go, Chuck, he's getting worse."

"I know dear, it's perfectly sickeneing, but I can't just throw the degenerate wreck on to the streets."

"Show her in, Grudge."

Grudge left and returned a moment later ushering in a large, middle-aged woman dressed in a long shapeless coat with an imitation fur collar tightly buttoned across her throat. She held up a handbag firmly in front of her ample bosom and spoke defiantly from the security of this portable embrasure.

"I'm Mrs Fizacherly. I've come about my boy Terry." She looked hard at Chuck Bold but said no more.

Seeing that no further information was immediately forthcoming he turned enquiringly towards Nick Smooth, but the lad merely whistled softly to himself and began a close examination of his finger nails.

"I swear to God, Mrs Fizacherly, I never laid a finger on him. My hand merely rested on his knee for a moment to steady myself. Its these terrible headaches you see, these terrible headaches."

Mrs Fizacherly appeared not to hear as she lowered herself with care on to the edge of a deep arm chair, ensuring as she did so that her knees remained firmly together.

"It's my boy Terry."

"What about Terry?" interposed Nick Smooth. "It's rather late and we were about to go to bed."

She looked towards him and her lips pursed as if she had just bitten into a lemon; then her attention returned to Chuck Bold.

"He's a werewolf."

"I beg your pardon?"

"He's a werewolf. He's outside if you don't believe me. Every month at full moon, regular as clockwork he has these turns, starts to grow hair all over and goes out seeking to ravage maidens in the park behind the public baths. Even the cat's not safe when he's like that and you've got to put a stop to it Mr Bold - you and 'im." She nodded her head sideways in the approximate direction of Nick Smooth. "It's more than flesh and blood can stand; here, take a look for yourself."

Mrs Fizacherly went out of the room and returned dragging what at first appeared to be a rather stunted gorilla. "This is Terry, Mr Bold."

"Say Hello to the nice gentleman, Terry."

But Terry was not disposed to do any such thing and merely emitted a sullen growl and took a swipe at Nick Smooth, who had moved closer to gain a better view. Mrs Fizacherly took a firm hold of the lad and shook him hard.

"You'll be civil to the nice gentleman or I'll slap your legs. I've 'ad about as much as I can take from you."

 THE ADVENTURES OF SUPERPUFF (Continued)

Chuck Bold inspected Terry with great interest and even allowed him to nuzzle the hand which had written 'Invertebrates of the Indus Valley'.

"And how long is he likely to remain like this, Mrs Fizacherly?"

Her eyes narrowed. "When the first shafts of sunlight pierce the grey dawn and a roseate glow bathes the Co-op, he slinks home like a jungle beast to 'is lair. Then, slowly, he begins to change until he's back once more to 'is old self - a joy and comfort to 'is mum in her declining years. Oh Mr Bold, you've got to 'elp me, widowed and alone as I am."

A crystal tear splashed on to her plastic handbag as Chuck Bold leaned forward and gave her arm a comforting squeeze. "We'll do all we can Mrs Fizacherly, but first you must tell us what this is all about."

She dabbed at her eyes with a soggy paper hanky. "Well, Mr Bold, I've said it before and I'll say it again: it's 'is 'abits."

"Habits?"

"Yes, 'is 'abits. His father says it was the lodger, but I know what done it. I always said he'd go blind or deaf but never anything like this." She turned towards her errant son. "I told you didn't I. Keep doing those things in the lav all hours God sends."

Terry's lip curled up revealing yellow fangs. He snarled viciously until a blow from his mother's handbag silenced him once more. "Didn't think I knew about them books you 'ad 'idden behind the cistern did you? Well it'll serve you right if you stay like it."

Chuck Bold held up his hand in an attempt to staunch the flood of invective.

"And your husband's theory about the lodger?"

For the first time since entering, Mrs Fizacherly smiled. "He was ever so nice, a real gentleman - even if he was foreign."

Chuck Bold and Nick Smooth looked at each other.

"Foreign?"

"Yes, from Transylvania; said his name was Frankenstein. Baron Frankenstein. Ever so clever 'e was. Never stopped talking about spare part surgery and the secret life force of Zing."

"Golly, Chuck, do we need to look further?"

"It certainly seems pretty clear to me Nick. This foreign johnnie certainly seems the sort of rotter who might take advantage of a lad's good nature in the manner, albeit unspecified, intimated by the good lady's husband." He turned to Mrs Fizacherly and smiled confidently at her.

"No need to worry Mrs F, we'll not rest for a moment until we've got to the bottom of this ghastly business - that's our job."

 THE ADVENTURES OF SUPERPUFF (Continued)

Mrs Fizacherly was still thinking of that smile when the 29 bus drew up at the bus stop ten minutes later. She clambered on board dragging Terry behind and was about to sit down when the conductor spotted them.

"Oi! Your'e not bringing him on this bus."

"But he's my son, he's a werewolf," objected Mrs Fizacherly.

"I don't give a monkey's if he's Harold Wilson, he's not coming on this bus."

She thought for a moment of that nice Mr Bold and whether he couldn't get her on the bus; but he was already fully occupied with a hand inside his silken shirt and a row of teeth marks on his shoulder that were already beginning to turn purple.

Bruce

You can read the subsequent episodes of this epic saga in Gay News.

 NO COMMENT

THE SALE OF THE CENTURY: At the YMCA (March 6th). Our mad price-50p each for pouffes (in lots of colours) (Evening Post)

PROGRAMME FOR GROUP MEETINGS: 3rd April: How well do you sleep?
10th April: Too much sex?
17th April: No meeting.

(Potters Bar National Housewives Register)

MAMMARY MIA! "Brooke Bond Tea, with milk like mother makes."
(Notice in a Sorrento Cafe)
