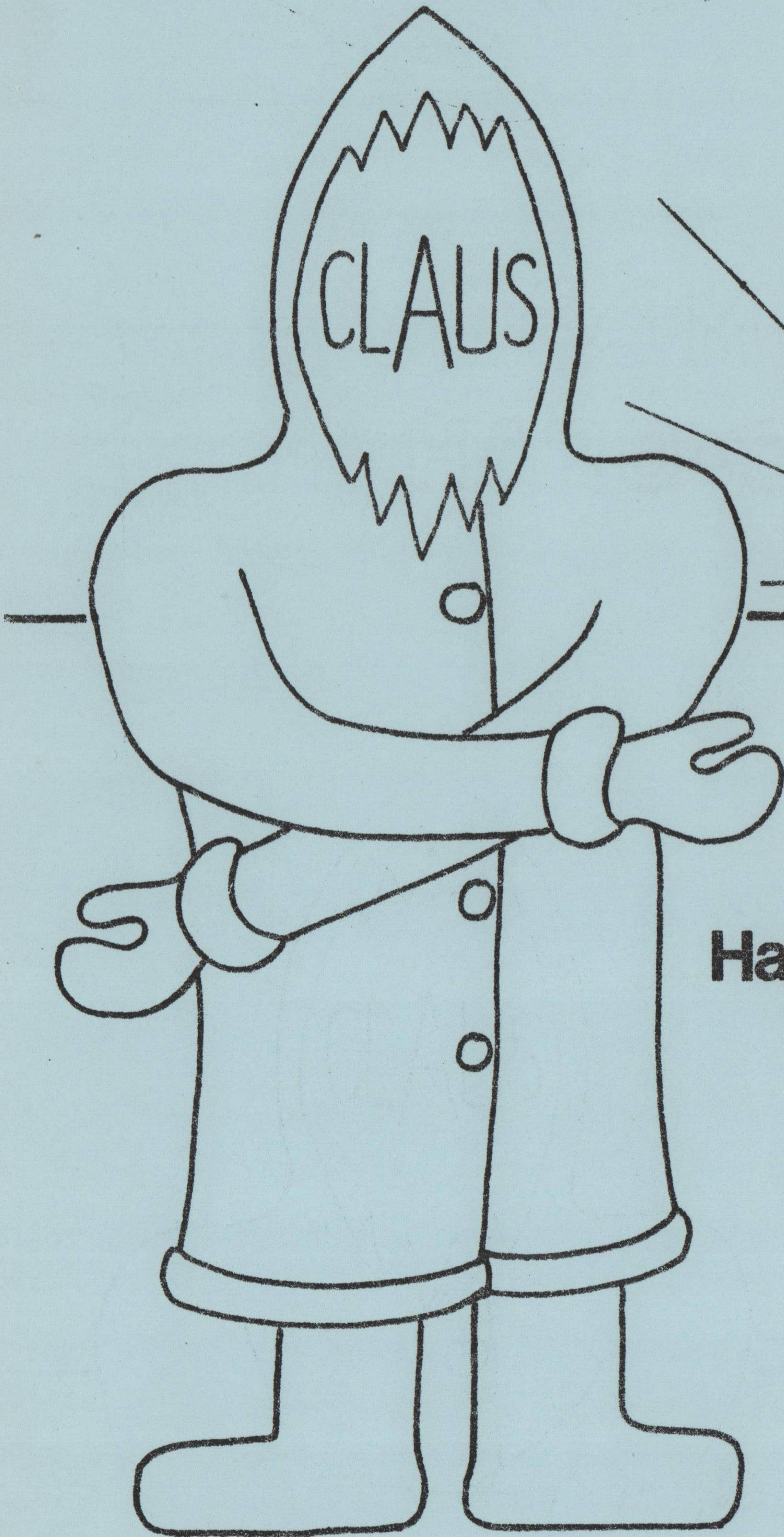


Dec 75



**Happy Christmas
from
CHIMAERA**

EDITORIAL

Another festive season is nearly upon us. Those of us in schools are busy marking reports; exams and Christmas plays are things to be endured with a stoical smile.

Hospital personnel, if not incapacitated by strikes and go-slows, are trying to improve Ward funds in order to give patients and staff who must be at work on Christmas Day a meal of traditional proportions.

Clergymen too are busier at this time, but I doubt if many postmen will be this year. Many of the rest of us will be taking manic trips to town in order to finish off Christmas shopping; an unfortunate percentage, jobless for one reason or another, will be counting the pennies from Social Security and working out budgets yet again.

To all of you, to all my friends and all acquaintances in the Notts/Derby area and farther afield if you get a copy of this Newsletter, I wish a Merry Christmas and an increasingly prosperous New Year,

Love and peace,

Heather.

PROGRAMME

NOTTINGHAM MEETINGS

WEDNESDAY PEOPLE'S CENTRE MEETING - POETIC JUSTICE from 8 pm.
DECEMBER 17th

Bring along your favourite poems, a bottle of beer and prepare to recite them (the poems, that is.) For those who have forgotten, the People's Centre is at 33, Mansfield Road, Nottingham (Upstairs)

WEDNESDAY A NEW YEARS EVE PARTY - from 9 'til ?
DECEMBER 31st

The address is Flat 2, 108 Foxhall Road, Forest Fields Nottingham. Please bring drinkies.

(Peter Katin is playing at the Albert Hall earlier in the evening.)

MONDAY A COFFEE EVENING - From 8 pm. at Richard's
JANUARY 5th

The address is 13, Balmoral Road, (off Forest Road near the High School) Nottingham.

WEDNESDAY PEOPLE'S CENTRE MEETING - FOR THE RECORD from 8 pm
JANUARY 14th

Hoffnung, Blaster Bates, Flanders and Swann, Rambling Syd Rumpo. We have a good selection of amusing records, but please bring your own favourites too. The address is given above.

MONDAY COME SKATING! at Nottingham Ice Rink from 7.30
JANUARY 19th

If you need an excuse to hold hands in public, here it is.

FRIDAY PORNOGRAPHY an illustrated talk by Dave Brown.
JANUARY 23rd

Hang up your plastic macs at 8 pm at the Albert Hall Institute (The Mock Tudor building at the top of Maid Marian Way). N.B. We don't know which room we will be in, but you can find out on the night by looking at the notice board on the right when you come in the entrance.

TUESDAY THE TRIP TO JERUSALEM - from 8 pm.
JANUARY 27th

FRIDAY A COFFEE EVENING at Ian and David's from 8 pm.
FEBRUARY 6th

The address is 64, Fabis Drive, Clifton Grove, Nottingham. (Any Clifton Bus from Broadmarsh) Coffee and/or puzzles. If you have any puzzles or games, bring them along.

WEDNESDAY PEOPLE'S CENTRE MEETING from 8 pm.
FEBRUARY 11th

DOUBLE ENTENDRES; if you've read any good ones lately or can make them up as you go along, this is your night. Bring a bottle too, if it helps your flow.

 PROGRAMME (Continued)

SATURDAY ST. VALENTINE'S DAY DISCO at THE YORKER from 8.30.
FEBRUARY 14th

Remember that although the Disco goes on 'till 11.45, the bar staff close the main entrance at 10.30 - so that's your latest time of arrival. Tickets are 35p (at the door - but 30p if you buy in advance). The Yorker is on Mansfield Road on the same side as, but just a little way past the Victoria Centre. We have the Upstairs Room.

DERBY MEETINGS

Meetings are at Heather and Carole's on alternative Mondays. The address is 278, Station Road, Mickleover, Derby and Heather gives details of how to get there later in the Newsletter. If you have any transport problems phone Derby 511651.

The dates are therefore:-

15th December, 29th December.

12th January, 26th January.

9th February. All are MONDAYS, all from 8 pm.

There are also GARRICK meetings from 8.30 pm on the following dates:-

7th January, 21st January and 4th February. All are Wednesdays.

The Garrick is on the corner of Ashbourne Road and Uttoxeter Old Road.

MANSFIELD MEETINGS

These are on MONDAYS alternately at the WHITE SWAN, Sutton in Ashfield and the YEW TREE, Mansfield.

The dates are:-

December 15th (Yew Tree), December 22nd (White Swan)-no meeting 29th

January 5th (White Swan), January 12th (Yew Tree)

January 19th (White Swan), January 26th (Yew Tree)

February 2nd (White Swan), February 9th (Yew Tree)

OTHER EVENTS

Discos are to be held every Friday evening from January 2nd at the Shoulder of Mutton, South Normanton. (From 8 pm) Entrance price is 30p at present - though it may be more by then.

CHE National Council - London. Weekend of December 13-14th.

 NOTES

1) Howard will NOT be sending Christmas cards this year, but will be donating money to CHE.

2) Thank you, Paul, for drawing us a couple of cartoons which appear later in the Newsletter.

 IMPORTANT NOTICE

By the time the next Newsletter emerges it will be almost time for our Annual General Meeting. I mention this now because our Treasurer has tendered his resignation as such, but not from the Committee at the last committee meeting. Ian is thoroughly fed up and disillusioned by the Combined Subscription Scheme, which appears to work on the principle that you send your money to Manchester and, if you're lucky you'll get 25% back to the local group. (A situation that could be remedied if members would heed our repeated pleas to renew membership through the local treasurer).

Also Hilary intends to resign as Secretary, which is not too surprising as she will have done the job for three years.... and a bloody thankless job it is too. She would have resigned last year, but no one was prepared to take over. This year she will not be persuaded.

If you are at all interested in being part of the machinery which keeps the group going, instead of happily sitting back to be spoon fed, start now in making your intentions known or there may be no machinery, just a lot of useless cogs.

 ROUND AND ABOUT

Discussion evenings certainly aren't your form of entertainment. We did anticipate a good turn out to at least the 'alternative medicine' and particularly to the 'Armed Forces' evening. Were we disappointed? Yes we bloody well were. What a waste of someone's time and our (THE GROUP) money to hire a room for 10 people including the speaker.

Alternative Monday evenings at Derby seem to be catching on, but I hope everyone realises that they are aimed specifically at members in DERBY, who, if they can't reach us on a bus (15 getting off at East Avenue and walking up) can always ring us from the Nag's Head.

Mansfield meetings have now spread from fortnightly to weekly events and seem to be doing well.

In Nottingham, apart from the discussion evenings, there was a very successful party at Geoff and Mike's, whilst Ian and David again held a packed out coffee evening. Pub meetings continued, but are never as well attended at this time of the year, especially with petrol prices going up.

National Housewives Register meetings went mad with one in October and two in November. At Repton we were assailed by 3 out of a total of 18+ members on the Pauline view of religion - being smugly told by one lady (wife of a Rev.) that it was alright to be gay as long as one didn't actually practise it. In fact, as she believed rigidly in no sex without a Christian type marriage, it was hard on lots of others too. They did give us a nice hamper of home-made goodies, which were duly shared between us.

 ROUND AND ABOUT (Continued)

At Darley Abbey they weren't so into religion/gays and considered themselves pretty liberal UNTIL, talking about our rally on Nov.23rd, and other marches we've taken part in we found two members of LIFE present. They got two discussions for the price of one and I suspect David may be continuing correspondence on the subject.

Derby was somewhat less traumatic, but here the main theme voiced was fear for their children. At all of these meetings I feel that this is the most valuable thing that we can do, making average intelligent housewives face the fact that they CAN have gay kids; that it's nobody's FAULT; that the kids in question still need the love and support that one hopes they have always been given up to that moment.

We have no more such meetings in the pipeline, but would welcome any more contacts.

Heather.

 CHE WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

For the second year in succession, the women chose to hold their conference in the Midlands. This time a one day event, the venue was the Portland Building of Nottingham University, and between 60-70 women and men managed to bridge the gap of non-information from National Office to get there.

The first Plenary Subject on getting women into CHE agreed that a lot of the hostility that exists between gay men and gay women could be worked out - if only they would get together and talk about it. All morning workshops were on the same subject and the main barriers to this.

Reporting back from her workshop to the Conference, Liz Stanley, former EC member, said that the gay men are hung up about gay women. "They don't understand women's sexuality. Men at the workshop wouldn't understand how a woman could have a sexual experience." She added that gay men had a hierarchical view of society, which meant that they felt they were higher up the scale. "There is a great need for people to talk. A lot of feelings and worries can be worked out by people talking."

Liz advocated the use of encounter and small discussion groups. And it was agreed that when the next CHE Bulletin is produced solely by women - early next year - the issue should be devoted to these techniques. The message was the same from other workshops reporting back to main conference. Women were often seen as a bit of an embarrassment in local gay groups. But it was felt by all that it was important that CHE groups should be mixed. As one delegate pointed out: "If CHE is fighting for sexual liberation, it cannot succeed until it comes to terms with women."

 CHE WOMEN'S CONFERENCE (Continued)

Other important provisions discussed during the day included the need for a women's contact phone number for each local group; the need for at least one woman staff member at national office ("To clean it out - it needs it!" quipped Liz); and the importance of separate women's meetings to run in conjunction with mixed group meetings.

Glenys Parry, CHE National Chairwoman, raised the question of local group newsletters. "I see a lot of newsletters," she said, "and most of them, although it isn't stated, are run by all-male cliques and written in a 'male gay style'. This was offensive to CHE's women members." Paul Temperton remarked: "This also alienates a vast number of gay men."

It was agreed that women members of local groups should attempt to influence their newsletters to combat the sexism shown.

Reporting back from the 'Sex and not sex' workshop Veronica Pickles said that there had been occasions in the history of CHE when sex with the convenor had been a condition of joining the local group. The workshop had discussed the moral implications of this and whether there was a need for rigid rules.

It was pointed out that new members, attending a group for the first time, could see the organiser as some sort of 'supergay' and were particularly vulnerable, especially if they had never had a gay sex experience. This could lead to very traumatic experiences for both new members and the person forced into 'star' category.

The conference wound up with a Disco at the Yorker which led one of the local men to remark that it was more like a housewives meeting than anything else. Hard luck brother - now you know how a lot of the women have felt in the past.

Thanks from me to Carole, Ian and David, Char, Howie and Kris for their assistance. It was a great shame that when we had a creche organised, no one brought any kids to occupy it.

Heather.

 MIKE COULSON

Oddly enough the right to take one's own life was established in Scottish law centuries before it ceased to be a criminal offence to do so in England, which is only a way of making it easy for me to say that as far as I'm concerned it would be a vulgar impertinence for me to ask why, oh why, did Michael Coulson have to die? He had the right and he took it and I have no right to say more of his choosing to do so than that.

 MIKE COULSON (Continued)

To someone like myself who didn't know him well, Michael was a person to be admired rather than loved. An expert in his own frighteningly recondite field (Sanskrit), Michael seemed by his very authority and intellectual superiority to be remote from someone such as me. That made his uncompromising stand for Gay Rights, in his own University of Edinburgh as well as outside, his work for SMG and his tireless devotion to the cause of law reform which put all but a few of us (and I hope you'll think about those few as you are reading this) to shame, all the more admirable to me. If only more people in his position, I used to think, had come out as he has, how much more quickly would our cause progress.

But in the last issue of SMG News to appear before he died, a completely different Michael Coulson had this to say on the front page:-

A Personal View

Some people are happy sharing their life with someone else, and some are happy ploughing their own furrow. But all the evidence suggests that a distressingly large number of gay men (Gay women seem to manage it better) aspire to the first yet find themselves in the second category. Gay radicals often turn this sad fact to account and preach that a permanent relationship is an inappropriate ideal imposed upon us by heterosexuals. But it strikes me as dangerously like self-oppression to suggest that the total mutual commitment of two human beings is something heterosexuals have any special rights over. (Of course we need not call that commitment 'marriage' when it is between two people of the same sex - so long as we remain clear in our own mind that what we are talking about is a relationship no less deep and meaningful.)

Should our failures and second starts teach us a sterile self-reliance, as some claim, and make us beware of putting our emotional trust in any other human being? I believe the opposite: that loneliness and vulnerability can be a gift for spiritual growth. The need for others is the mechanism by which we break out of the narrow prison of the self. Perhaps what afflicts Gay relationships is not that we are too vulnerable but that we make ourselves too invulnerable. Loving means lowering the defences. Making mistakes should be how we learn better. The trouble is that those who hold back teach themselves to hold back the next time: only those who commit themselves learn better ways of commitment. A relationship may fail because two life styles are truly incompatible or because another heart is too frozen to respond with more than a semblance of affection. More important, it may fail because we have not learnt to love someone as an independent human being rather than a projection of our own needs. But to understand that one is unhappy because one has not loved enough is the most constructive form of unhappiness that anyone can know.

 MIKE COULSON (Continued)

In our society if people set their hearts on a car or a house, they usually think in terms of working to acquire it. Yet few seem to think of happiness as something to be worked for. Instead we swing helplessly between hoping to be handed it on a plate and believing with facile cynicism that it's always an illusion. A PARTNERSHIP IS NOT THE STATIC UNION OF TWO PEOPLE WHO ARE RIGHT FOR EACH OTHER, BUT A SLOWLY DEVELOPING AND SOMETIMES PAINFUL CREATION, LIMITED BY NOTHING IN THE LAST RESORT EXCEPT OUR OWN CAPACITY TO LOVE.

Michael Coulson.

This to me (and here I have to write personally because I know not everyone will agree, much though I'd like them to) was one of the most life-enhancing and heartening things I have ever read. I'm glad I had the chance to tell him so, and then, unbelievably, he was gone. Why is not for me to ask. What I know is that I have lost someone who, from the moment that short article was published, was a tower of strength to me. What I know too is that many, many people, inside Groups as well as outside them, have all kinds of problems which they are unable to talk about except perhaps in a jokey, superficial way. We take people too much at face value (and that value depends far too much on whether or not we like their faces). We are scared of revealing, scared of intruding. We keep too much to ourselves, too much that could be warm and helpful and loving. Can't we, please, for the sake of what we can give as well as for the satisfaction we might get out of it, try to do better than that? I can think of many worthy memorials to Mike Coulson's memory, but I can think of none more important than that.

Richard.

 GRAND LIMERICK CONTEST

Scattered through this issue you will find entries for this competition. I found it quite amazing as I'd imagined writing two myself and awarding a fictitious prize to our fictitious member Chris Howard. After little thought and help from impartial Staff at work, the winner was declared to be David Edgley, alias Ethel Wordsworth, The Bogeyperson, Myopia Phogbound et.al.

I have therefore awarded him the prize, which he has no doubt eaten by now. He deserves it, not only for 'Drusilla' but for the determination with which he set about writing a LIMERICK. To get the winner I got one poem, one article, a cartoon and four efforts in the Limerick style.

I would also like to thank Carole, Ian, Irene and Pat for their entries too; only two were too libellous to print.

MERRY CHRISTMAS



"Rents up, reindeer food up, wages up, can Santa Claus survive? Peter Snow -Santa's Workshop-News at Ten."



"When will your mother realize you don't want to be irresistible to women?"



"And just where am I supposed to find pickled gherkins and strawberries at this time of night?"



"And now take your partners for the Gay Gordons . . ."

 LIMERICKS

THE WINNER

A witch called 'Drusilla the Dyke'
 Eschewed both the broom and the bike.
 She flew to 'The Dog'
 On a travelling log
 And returned from 'La Chic' on a trike.

SOME OF THE REST

One of the problems of Limericks
 Is finding some suitable gimmericks,
 But the riddle that beats me,
 That really defeats me,
 Is getting the last bloody line to rhyme.

On the overnight sleeper to Troon
 He met a nice gay from Dunoon,
 But crossing the border
 It became out of order.
 Now they languish in gaol in Kildoon.

A lady once said 'How dare they
 Assume from my dress that I'm gay.
 By the tone of my voice
 They must see that I'm choice.
 One drink and I'll go anyway.

There was a young actor named Martin,
 Who intended to take the star part in
 A film. So you see
 Off to London went he,
 Then ruined his screen test by fartin'.

There was a young dyke of renown,
 Very able at bedding round town.
 Monogamy got her,
 The dirty old rotter,
 Which cut her activities down.

The Notts/Derby section of CHE
 Has no problems at all whilst at play.
 But mention 'Campaign'
 And they wilt with the strain,
 Then vanish completely away.

A masochist whose name was Box,
 Searched long for the key that unlocks
 His ultimate thrill;
 But a voice thin and shrill
 Said "Just watch 'Opportunity Knocks'."

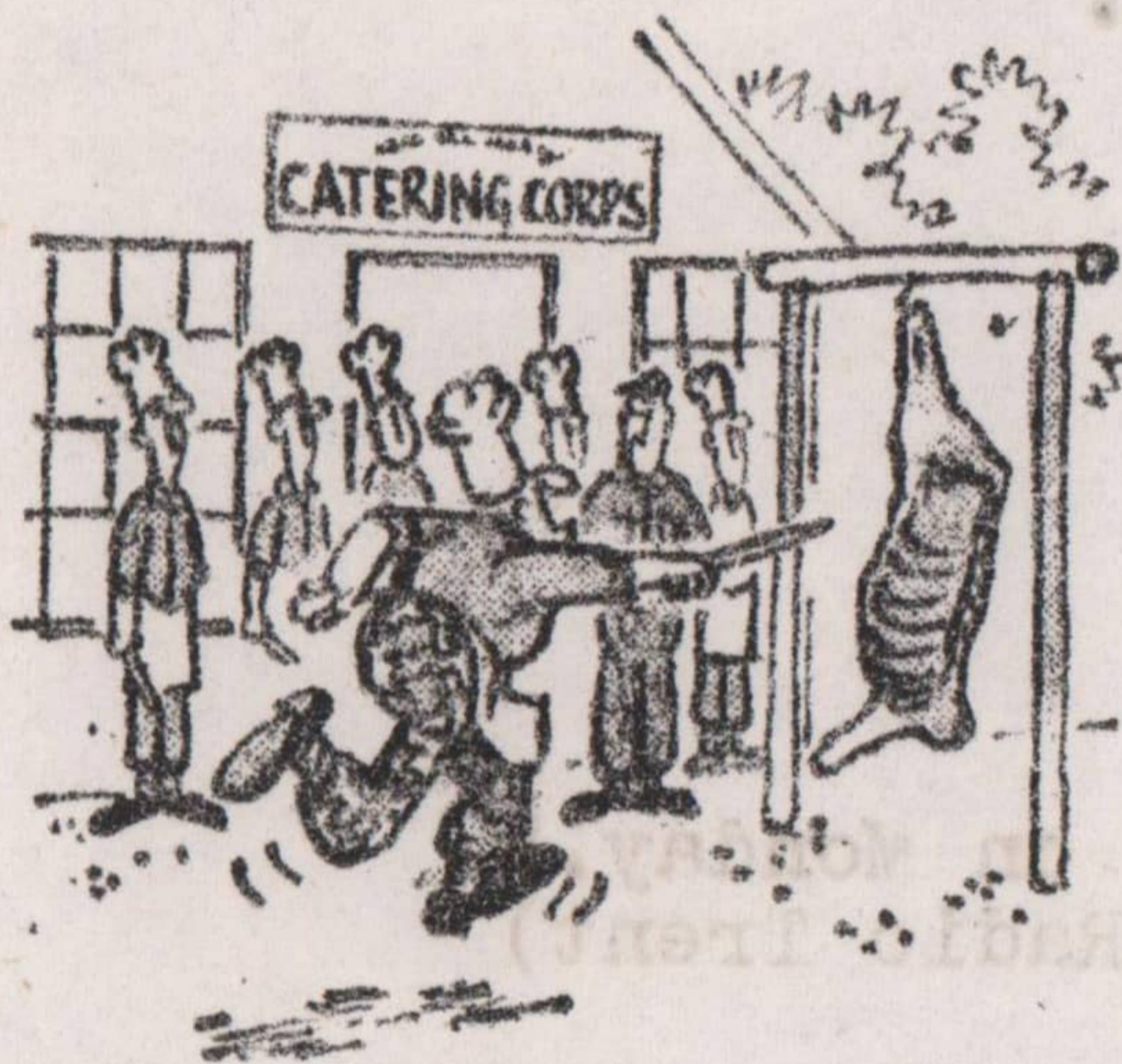


Dark

"Oh, do stop worrying—we'll worry about the dipped headlights when they make it official."



"Minister, the British have retaliated! They've replaced Magnus Magnusson on 'Mastermind' with Tony Blackburn."



"There's nothing in the Highway Code that says I can't park on a traffic warden!"



 YET MORE LIMERICKS

There once was a fellow named Clough,
 Who shouted "I'm finished, I'm through
 With this mad city life
 With its bustle and strife,
 So I'll go back to work on the plough.

There was a young lady from Crewe
 Who didn't know what to do.
 She sat on the cat,
 Thought it was the mat.
 I'll now leave the rest up to you.

There was a young girl who got round
 All the women that were to be found.
 She ended her days
 With just one of those gays
 Crying "This is ideologically unsound!"

There now is a woman called Heather
 Who really just can't decide whether
 A Limerick that's rude
 Is really too crude!
 She's reaching the end of her tether.

"Dr Herrema returns to his Limerick Factory on Monday."
 (Radio Trent)

Our poems suffered serious reduction
 During Herrema's prolonged abduction.
 Now we write Limericks
 In a couple of ticks,
 Since we're working at full mass production.

 RALLY 1975 STYLE

Our second National Demo. once again took place in London, once again in November. Our timing must be a bit out because it's much more pleasant to march in Summer time. This year the assembly was at Hyde Park and approximately 3000 people then marched, banners and all, to Trafalgar Square. This to me is really the most important part. So many Londoners and visitors too, are accustomed to demos. and meetings of all sorts in the Square that they never take any notice of them. Therefore the size of any march and the impact of its banners and slogans are the things that get to the general public whilst it is still on the streets; unless of course you march on Sunday, just after lunchtime, when your self-respecting Londoner is home from the pub with his/her feet up.

 RALLY 1975 STYLE (Continued)

You could say it was fun; well it was fun, but embarrassing if you were at all musical. I appreciate the gesture in getting two girls from Bradford Gay Lib to help Veronica sing their song. Please, another time, can we get the two who can sing?

Reverend Tom Bigelow unfortunately couldn't hit the notes either in a somewhat nauseous but loud rendition of 'Gays shall overcome' which also had many people around me squirming painfully. In fact the unanimous high point in the speechifying came right at the end, when Glenys, in fine voice and fur coat, reminded everyone that Nelson, on his column above, had said as his dying words "Kiss me, Hardy." Encouraging everyone present to kiss their neighbour she became instantly practical, telling us to go home and behave with the same honesty as when surrounded by 3000 other gays. From then on coffee houses in the area became temporarily gay, but nobody seemed to care as long as you didn't hit them accidentally with a banner pole. Of course it was the publicity event of the year too, the Guardian having a back page article in Daily Mirror style and The Times giving us three lines in the style of the obituary column. SHALL WE OVERCOME?

 CHRISTMAS IS NEUTER, COMRADES!

Should we really be worrying about our language being loaded with sexist (mainly male) overtones, when most languages place a gender on every noun? Perhaps, for instance, there is some subtle Freudian reasoning behind the Russian insistence that a cistern is feminine, but surely Freud would balk at their notion of a feminine sausage? Yet the Germans agree; as they also do over the femininity of nosebags and influenza. But though a German zip-fastener may be masculine, it changes sex as it crosses the Iron Curtain.

The situation that I find most difficult to comprehend is the way these foreigners apply different genders to various parts of one's anatomy. Le or La? It's rather surprising to learn which parts of me the French think are male and which parts are female. Teutonic toes are feminine, which must be disturbing for the neuter legs above them. Maybe an encounter with a pair of good, feminine Soviet legs would make them a little sexier - especially as Russian toes are uncompromisingly masculine.

Well, why am I writing this drivel, you should be asking yourselves by now? The answer is PERCHILDCHESTER - Michael Steed's non-sexist Manchester. Let us hope that this infant is still-born and that there are no further progeny. Fiddling about with our suffixes and prefixes could have dire consequences, as I'm sure I needn't tell you.

Could you imagine Percy Thrower recommending a load of womanure for your hisbaceous bordress? Or your asking for a record of Beethoven's Moonlight Daughterata op.27 no.2? It is just this sort of thing that starts wars. So if you hear on the News that shelicoptresses are firing ballistic misteriles all over the Northern Shemisterphime, you'll know why.

The Bogeyperson.

 ON SPEAKING TO THE NHR

Not W.I. nor Women's Liberation;
 This buttress of the Guardian's circulation,
 These shareholders of Marks and Mothercare,
 We thank thee for this chance to show our flair.
 This new experience sent to test us:-
 Addressing National Housewives Registers.
 We sally forth with rapier wits to sting 'em
 In Derby, East Leake, Darley Abbey, Bingham.

We puncture with our sharpened repartees
 Their follies, except when issues eccles-
 -iastical are raised against us like a rod.
 (Though God is good, we're not too good on God.)
 Genesis, Deuteronomy, then St. Paul
 Are quoted as we quietly climb the wall.
 So hone your minds in case your brains grow flabby,
 For next it's Mansfield, Burton, Darley Abbey.

The moral lunacies of Leviticus
 Are used to flail us. What a pity! Cos'
 It's not just homosexuals he can't take,
 It's those who dine on lobsters, pork or steak.
 We made our points and backed them with statistics,
 While scoffing home-made cake and shortbread biscuits.
 And multitudes of invitations kept on
 Arriving from Uttoxeter and Repton.

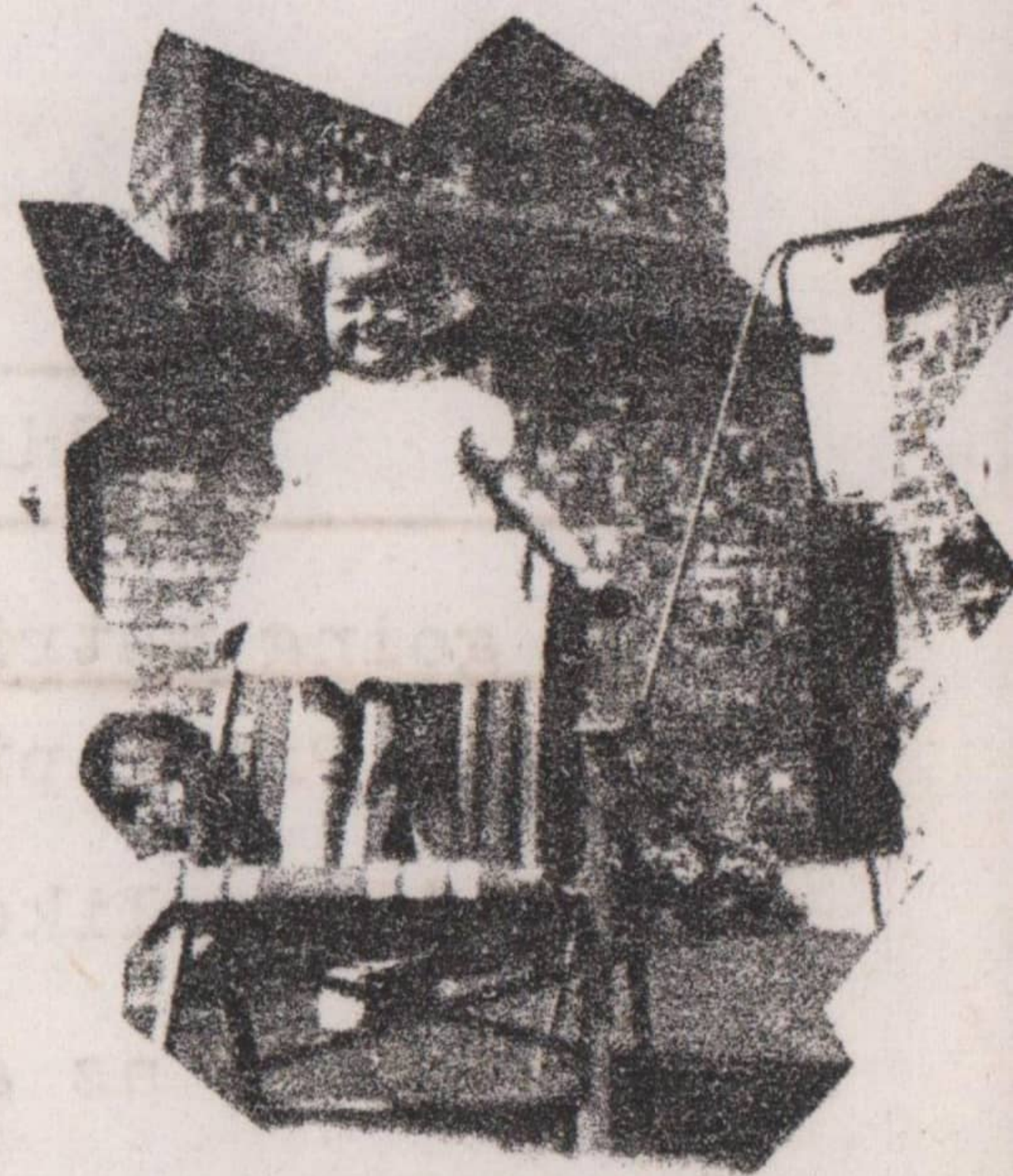
With solidarity and with strategies well-planned,
 We'll overwhelm this Chablis-and-Cortina land.
 So here we come! To challenge and disturb ya'
 Amid your weeping-willow fringed suburbia.
 Where next will our campaigning forays be
 We ask ourselves? But suddenly we see
 A messenger, who reads from a cartouche
 And summons us to Ashby de la Zouch.

Wordsworth (Ethel)

 FACSIMILIMERICKS

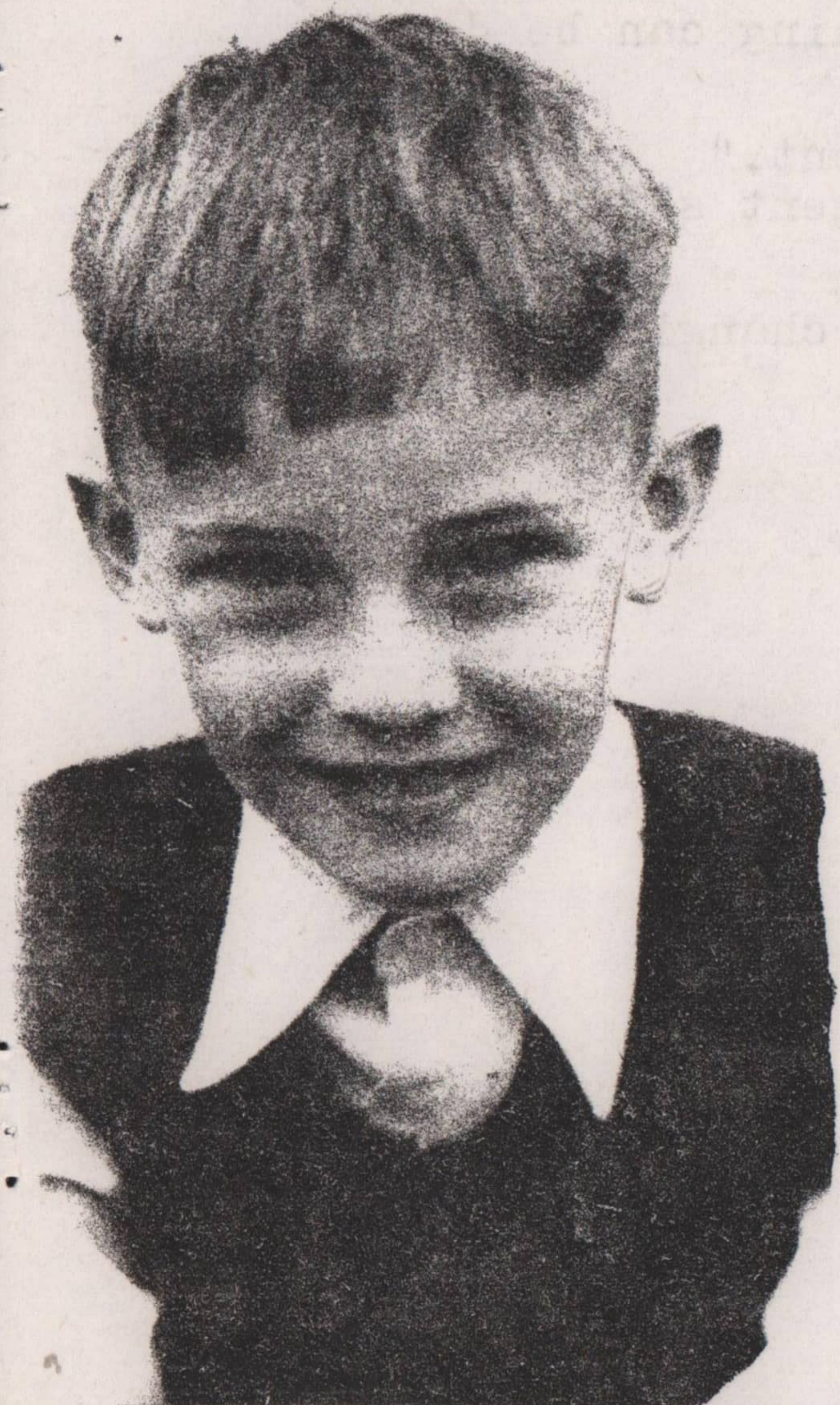
Boys and girls come out to play,
 Come out with your local CHE.
 Come and campaign
 Or come for a ball,
 But bring lots of money or don't come at all.

There were two young gay boys
 And they couldn't stand the noise
 Of the music in the clubs and murky lights.
 So their only occupation
 Was divine syncopation,
 Which, with nothing on, they practised through the night.



BLASTS FROM THE PAST

Identify the six group members from these photographs and you could win the Reader's Digest Golden Treasury of Trevor Locke's speeches. (Complete on 37 LP's).



 THE END

On going metric:-

Peter Piper picked 9.092 litres of pickled peppers.

It hit me like 1,016 kilograms of bricks.

A miss is as good as 1.609 kilometres.

Beat him within 2.54 centimetres of his life.

Thoughts on money:- If you pay peanuts, you get monkeys.

Dolly Guys:- "James Caan, the hulking star of Rollerball, had an unfortunate experience in a Las Vegas bar the other night according to my chief fink out there. He and his close chum Elliot Gould fell into conversation with a strikingly attractive blonde.

But something Caan said appeared to upset the young person - and she promptly upended a glass of whisky over him. Caan, however, restrained himself. His only irritation emerged after he and Gould left the bar together and Gould calmly informed him that the blonde had been a transvestite."

(The Daily Mirror)

A conference is a gathering together of people who individually can do nothing, but as a body can decide nothing can be done.

"Fairy Liquid - leads the Grey Liberation Front."
(Nationwide detergent survey)

The Jamaican-Jewish Gay Women's Tuba club is changing its name to the Black Dyke Mills Band.
